THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 152 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · APRIL 5, 1941 NUMBER 14

IN THIS ISSUE

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 393

EDITORIALS

The Spell Is Broken 395
Knudsen's Coup d'Etat 396
Vichy's True Colors 397
Matsuoka's Visit 398

ARTICLES

Yugoslav Explosion *by Stoyan Pribichevich* 399
Chungking and Washington *by I. F. Stone* 400
Battle of the Atlantic *by Donald W. Mitchell* 401
Bombs Over the Hedgerows *by Charles Duff* 404
The Opportunists *by Christopher La Farge* 407
In the Wind 409
A Native at Large *by Jonathan Daniels* 410

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

The Modern Poetry of America Hispana, II *by Alfonso Reyes* 411
U.S.S. Jezebel *by Gilbert Highet* 412
Science and Society *by Hugh H. Darby* 413
The South *by James Orrick* 414
The Lins in China *by Edgar Snow* 415
Land of the Free *by Dorothy Van Doren* 416
Recollections of Freud *by Gregory Zilboorg* 416
In Brief 417
Drama: Minority Report *by Joseph Wood Krutch* 417
Records *by B. H. Haggin* 418

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS 419

Editor and Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Managing Editor ROBERT BENDINER
Washington Editor I. F. STONE
Literary Editor MARGARET MARSHALL

Associate Editors
KEITH HUTCHISON MAXWELL S. STEWART

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
MARY HOWARD ELLISON

Published weekly and copyright, 1941, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Washington Bureau: 856 National Press Building, Washington, D. C. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

The Shape of Things

THE ITALIAN FLEET HAS SHOWN SUCH A penchant for snug harbors and so strong an antipathy for close contact with the enemy that it is hard to believe that it ventured into the Ionian Sea seeking a real battle. Perhaps the Italian High Command was misled by an official British announcement a few days earlier to the effect that the fleet had returned to Alexandria after a sweep through the middle Mediterranean. This might have suggested that Britain's heavy ships would be refueling at a safe distance and that an attempt to intercept convoys off the Greek coast would not be too risky an enterprise. Whether or not this was the means used to entice the Italian navy to sea, it certainly fell into a trap and paid the heavy price of three first-class cruisers and two destroyers certainly sunk. In addition, one battleship of the Littorio class was badly damaged. Among the prisoners picked up by the British were a number of Germans. Has Hitler put his bailiffs on board the Italian fleet? If so, this battle, which leaves the Italian navy in a parlous condition, suggests that it will take more than German leaven to raise Italian morale. At the other end of the Mediterranean there has been a clash between the British and French following an attempt by the former to halt convoyed merchant ships off the Algerian coast. This may prove a minor incident but now that its relative strength in the Mediterranean has been further increased by the battle of the Ionian Sea, Britain may be less tolerant of French breaches of the blockade. At the same time Nazi pressure on Vichy to obtain use of the French fleet may well be intensified.

*

THE FALL OF CHEREN AND HARAR MARK THE beginning of the end for the Italians in East Africa. With the whole of Italian and British Somaliland in British hands, the Addis Ababa-Jibuti railroad cut, and the capture of Massawa in Eritrea now apparently only a matter of days, the main Italian forces in Ethiopia are completely barred from escape. Rather than allow the tens of thousands of Italian colonists to fall into the hands of natives bent on revenge, the Italian command may have to surrender outright to the British. Although the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

territory itself is not of first-rate importance, such a surrender would be a bitter blow for the Axis—particularly after the recent setback in Yugoslavia. It would liberate a substantial British army for action in either Greece or Western Libya. It would eliminate the last remaining bases for Axis naval activity in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. And in eliminating that region as a belligerent zone, it might open the way for the direct shipment of war supplies on American ships as far as the Suez Canal. This might become a decisive factor if a German attack made the Balkans a major theater of war.

✶

SEIZURE OF ITALIAN, GERMAN, AND DANISH merchant ships by the Coast Guard following the revelation of sabotage aboard many of the Italian vessels constitutes an undeniably grave step. The action has already been protested vigorously by the Axis powers. A rupture of diplomatic relations is even possible if the United States takes the further step of taking title to the ships under the Espionage Act. Yet the seizure has a firm basis in both international and domestic law. The action was taken under what is known as the "right of angary." This right has its roots in long-established custom going back into the Middle Ages. It was carefully defined in a number of treaties in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Italy itself invoked this right in seizing 34 German ships in November, 1915, before it entered the war against Germany. In domestic law, the Espionage Act of 1917 gives the Secretary of the Treasury the right to seize vessels to protect them against damage. It is difficult to see how action could have been avoided in the present instance. The damage inflicted on many of the ships by their Italian crews was considerable and doubtless would have been intensified if the vessels had not been taken over by the Coast Guard. The damage was done apparently on the direct orders of the Italian consular officials. Ironically enough, the orders were transmitted through the Italian consulate in Newark, the closing of which had been requested by the United States government. Whether the seized ships will be put into use by the United States government remains to be seen. But in view of the government's need for ships to transport raw materials for our armament program, there is every reason for believing that the ships will be drafted into immediate service, as permitted by law.

✶

ALL THE COUNTRIES OCCUPIED BY GERMANY, even those like Denmark which submitted to protection without resistance, are compelled to pay for the privilege. They are assessed amounts supposed to represent the actual costs of the armies of occupation but it would seem that questions of what the traffic will bear also enter into the Nazi calculations. According to estimates given in the House of Commons recently, the total bill for the conquered western countries alone is about $4,600,000,000 annually. The levy on France, in respect of which definite official figures have been published by the German authorities, represents almost three-quarters of this total and is equivalent to $80 for every Frenchman. The assessment on the Norwegians, however, is believed to be still higher, amounting to around $100 per capita annually. These amounts appear to be considerably in excess of the sums actually spent by the German army within the countries in question. A recent report from Vichy quoted financial experts as agreeing that Germany is spending only about 125 million francs daily on its forces in France while it receives from the French government 400 millions. As a result, the German government is rapidly accumulating a huge credit balance at the Bank of France which on February 1 is said to have reached 53 billion francs. This gives the Nazis abundant funds for financing propaganda inside France, for purchasing food and material in the unoccupied area, and for buying control of French industries. The French government, struggling with a hopelessly unbalanced budget, can only supply these funds by means of interest-free loans from the Bank of France. The upshot is that money becomes more and more plentiful while goods grow increasingly scarce. France seems doomed to suffer the worst sort of inflation and a complete financial breakdown.

✶

THE LA FOLLETTE COMMITTEE'S LATEST REport is so timely that it will probably get little attention in the press. We hope to discuss it at greater length in a later issue and note only that this report—on the Little Steel strike—is of the greatest relevance to the defense program. The committee points out that in the last war "the most serious obstacles to defense had their roots in the refusal of certain employers to bargain collectively." Most prominent among those "certain employers" now, as then, are the Little Steel companies, especially Bethlehem. "With an enlightened labor policy written into federal statute," the La Follette committee says, "we should not permit this to happen again." Uninterrupted production of steel is more vital than ever and we agree with the committee's conclusion: "Certain it is that the nation cannot permit these companies today to take the same attitude they took in 1937. . . . Any company which today stands up and flatly refuses to enter into a signed bargaining contract under all circumstances . . . [is] endangering the national security. Such conduct not only threatens the vital continuity of production but challenges the nation's domestic authority, weakens respect of labor for the national aims, and destroys the sense of unity and national effort." If Bethlehem's workers were as contemptuous of the law as its management is, their attitude would be termed sabotage of defense.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YET BETHLEHEM STEEL WENT UNREBUKED in the press for ordering an employee representation plan election in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and carrying out its design in a manner calculated to provoke trouble. Bethlehem's shrewd managers know that the labor board regards the holding of an election on company property as one of the indications of company unionism, and it has become customary for that reason to hold these employee representation plan elections off company property. In this case Bethlehem set up the ballot boxes within the plant in a way that was almost certain to cause a walkout. There is a maxim of the law which says that justice delayed is justice denied. The S. W. O. C. filed its complaint against Bethlehem's employee representation plan in August of 1937 and an NLRB complaint was issued that same month, but the NLRB did not declare the plan invalid until August, 1939, two years later. Not until February 17, this year, did the Circuit Court of Appeals finally hear the case and a decision has yet to be rendered. The settlement of the strike in Bethlehem was a victory for the union, but the company provoked another strike in the same way in its Cambria plant at Johnstown, where arrangements were made for a plan election. Trouble now threatens again at Lackawanna, where the company is accused of failing to live up to its agreement. Eugene Grace, who headed Bethlehem during the last war, seems intent on making the same disgraceful labor policy record in this one.

*

A GOOD START SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MADE by the new National Defense Mediation Board. Of the first four strikes certified to it, settlements have been reached in two, those at the Condenser Corporation in Plainfield, New Jersey, and the Universal Cyclops Company in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania. While the agreements do little more than safeguard the rights of the returned strikers and lay the basis for mediation, the truth is that labor has been ready to mediate most of these walkouts anyway. Even the New York *Times* on March 29 felt compelled to condemn the International Harvester Company for its refusal to mediate after the C. I. O. union on strike had accepted the mediation board's proposal. International Harvester, despite tripled earnings last year, is unwilling to grant any wage increases. The union, as shown in its newest reply to the board, would like to arbitrate the wage issue, but as we go to press all the company will accept is mediation. The fourth strike certified to the board is that of the Vanadium Corporation at Bridgeville, where the union claims that the hiring of five non-union men as guards is a violation of their agreement with the company. E. D. Bransome, head of the company, is one of Sidney Hillman's assistants at the OPM but this does not seem to make him any readier for the minor concessions needed to settle the strike.

"HYSTERIA" IS THE WORD MOST COMMONLY used to describe the temper of certain Congressmen now engaged in cooking up dire threats against organized labor. We dissent. The word implies a genuine conviction on the part of these gentlemen that collective bargaining is blocking the defense of the republic. The callous truth is that they have found in the defense program a heaven-sent opportunity to sizzle labor into submission by a fierce war of nerves. "When the time comes that it is necessary to deal with the enemies of the nation in the factory or elsewhere, I believe I can speak for each member of the committee . . . they would not hesitate one split second to enact legislation to send them to the electric chair." The author of this sentiment, unlike the idiot who yells "Fire!" in a crowded theater just to see what happens, is in no danger of being hauled up before a magistrate for creating a panic. He is Representative Sumners of Texas, he was talking of defense strikes when he made the remark, and he will go right on serving his country as chairman of the House Judiciary (of all things) Committee. Mr. Sumners unhappily is not alone in his blood-curdling ambitions. His Georgia colleague, Mr. Cox, would draft all manpower in the country between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five. Representative Smith of Virginia, who "investigated" the National Labor Relations Board half to death, wants his smear area extended to take in all phases of defense. And Mr. Ford of California would make defense strikes "treason," punishable by twenty-five years' imprisonment or by death if the strike causes fatalities. We hardly think these gentry expect their electric-chair-and-forced-labor prescription to be taken seriously—there's nothing like demanding a mile when you hope to get a yard—but their ravings are not calculated to stimulate the country's morale. Sumners, Cox, *et al* could do with that "cooling-off period" we've been hearing so much about.

The Spell Is Broken

THE hypnotic spell cast upon the world by Hitler's methods of terror has been broken by the Yugoslav people. Reports from Belgrade picture them as light-hearted in their successful overthrow of the capitulating Cvetkovitch government. But they are not light-headed, and in uniting to defy the dragon they know well the heavy price which may be exacted for their daring. Memories of the suffering and devastation that afflicted Serbia in the last war are far from dim. Yet Yugoslavs know also that to keep the independence for which they then fought, they must be prepared to fight again. For they are not deceived by the high-falutin promises of the "new order" and they realize that by accepting Hitler's protection they would be submitting their necks to a perpetual yoke.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus the new Yugoslavian government has taken the stand that it cannot put its neutrality into Nazi keeping. It does not threaten war but it states plainly that it will resist to the utmost any invasion of its rights. Nevertheless this action puts Hitler in a position where, for the first time in his dealings with small nations, he must choose between equally risky and disagreeable alternatives. Had he grasped in time the temper of the Yugoslavs, he might have decided to leave them alone, even though that would have complicated the problem of dealing with Greece. But he thought he had another Bulgaria on his hands and the only thing needed was the signature of the pliant Cvetkovitch. That he obtained and, ignoring the ominous rumblings from Belgrade, the Axis press broke into paeans of triumph.

Now Hitler's pact has been flung back in his face and he must either accept the rebuff and consequential loss of prestige or he must recast his whole Balkan plan in order to invade and punish Yugoslavia. There are signs that immediately he will make one last effort to get the Simovitch government to reconsider. All Germans are being withdrawn from the country while every weapon known to the war of nerves is being brought into play. Particularly the Nazis hope to split Yugoslavia by playing on both the fears and the racial sentiments of the Croats. This is truly a tender spot, for while the Croats as a whole are thoroughly anti-Nazi they occupy the region which will bear the first brunt of any Axis attack. Moreover, they have not in the past been fairly treated by the Serbians and they see in the new government elements which hitherto stood for Serbian hegemony in the triune kingdom. This is the kind of situation which the Nazis are skilled in exploiting but their efforts are likely to be wasted, as Stoyan Pribichevich points out in his article on page 399, if the Simovitch cabinet gives clear guarantees of Croatian autonomy.

Assuming, as we have every right to, that Yugoslavia stands firm, Hitler must call off his scheduled attack on Greece, and attempt to subdue the obstinate southern Slavs. His forces in Bulgaria will have to be turned west and new divisions concentrated north of the Danube. There are reports of Hungarian and Bulgarian mobilization which may indicate that he will attempt to make these enforced allies, both of which have claims on Yugoslavia, do some of his fighting for him. Northern Yugoslavia is open country and military experts do not believe that much would be done to defend it. But the Yugoslav army has the training and equipment to make a prolonged stand in the mountainous regions of the west and south.

The first victim of a German attack might well be the battered Italian army in Albania, for there is every reason to suppose that the Yugoslavs would drive in on its rear with the double objective of joining up with the Greeks and of capturing a new outlet to the sea. The story that Italy is trying to persuade Hitler to be patient with Belgrade is probably well-founded.

Another reason why the invasion of Yugoslavia will be such an unpleasant necessity for Germany is its importance to German economy. Something like one-third of German imports of bauxite (from which aluminum is extracted) are derived from Yugoslav mines as well as important quantities of copper, lead, and zinc. Yugoslavia has also provided Germany with considerable amounts of food.

Economically as well as strategically then, Yugoslavia's refusal to knuckle under quietly means, at least, a serious setback to Berlin. It ruins Nazi plans for a bloodless conquest of the Balkans and threatens the stream of supplies which Germany has been drawing from that region. It has already given a tremendous fillip to Greek and Turkish morale, and as the news spreads it will fan the ever-smoldering resistance of the captive nations. Finally, it may well open a prolonged struggle on that second front which Hitler has striven so hard to avoid and force a fatal postponement of the invasion of Britain.

Knudsen's Coup d'Etat

AT 10 a. m. on Wednesday, March 26, Sidney Hillman left Washington by plane for a badly needed vacation in Florida. Before he left, Knudsen had discussed with him the possibility that the Allis-Chalmers plant in Wisconsin might have to be taken over under Section 9 of the Selective Service Act. This provides for the drafting, not of workers, but of plants. Hillman agreed this might have to be done, but nothing was said of a "back-to-work" order, an order the OPM has no authority to issue. After Hillman left, Knudsen went into conference with Max Babb, head of Allis-Chalmers, one of Babb's directors named Armour, and Under-Secretary of the Navy Forrestal. The result of that conference, held without Hillman's knowledge, was the issuance of an order to "both" the union and the company ordering a resumption of work. "This isn't an order," as one New Dealer put it; "it's a coup d'état."

If the Allis-Chalmers strikers permit themselves to be bullied back to work in this fashion, and if unions in the rest of the country fail to support them, the consequences for the labor movement and for its representatives in the OPM will be very serious. Knudsen, with the support of the press, will have become not merely the "czar" of defense but also the "czar" of labor, and employers will be encouraged to refuse concessions in controversies with their employees. For not the least shocking aspect of Knudsen's arrogant behavior is that the Allis-Chalmers Company, with a notoriously bad labor record as far back as the last war, has refused to accept the OPM compromise of March 1 to which the union had agreed. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OPM, after obtaining the union's agreement, failed to bring pressure on the company. Knudsen a month later issued an ultimatum to the workers instead. It is no secret in Washington that the Allis-Chalmers Company is in no hurry to settle the strike. It has $40,000,000 in defense orders. Its president, Max Babb, is a leading figure of the America First Committee. He would like to use the situation to break the union, and certain of his cynical reflections on the strike in an unguarded "off the record" moment with a government representative have leaked back to Washington and are well known in the OPM. They make Knudsen's attitude and action all the more reprehensible.

The terms set out by the OPM on March 1 were mild enough. The union was to order its members back to work. The management was to agree to the appointment of an impartial referee to pass upon union complaints of "disrupters" in the plant—this was the only concession asked. The referee's decision was to be binding on both parties. These "disrupters" were not merely non-union men who voiced opposition to the union, but a small group of a dozen toughs who picked fights with union stewards. At least one of them has a criminal record. This man, while in the navy, beat up an officer, was placed "in the brig," escaped through a porthole, swam ashore to Brooklyn and fled to Milwaukee, where he obtained a job with Allis-Chalmers. A girl friend betrayed him to the police. He served ten months in Leavenworth, and returned to Allis-Chalmers. He left to become a policeman, was dishonorably discharged after eight years of service, and then went back to work for Allis-Chalmers. Two of the men against whom the union complained, Nicholaus Imp and Mike Bohachef, were the subjects of serious charges in a letter to Governor Heil of Wisconsin last December 26. The head of the union asked the governor to remove District Attorney Steffes of Milwaukee County from office for failure to order the arrest of these two men after they "deliberately and maliciously" drove their car into a union man outside the plant early on the morning of December 18.

These two men, Imp and Bohachef, brought the charges of "irregularities" in the strike balloting held under Wisconsin law on January 21. These charges have now been made the excuse for a newspaper campaign smearing the union and for hostile action by Governor Heil's reactionary Wisconsin labor commission. We should like to see these charges thoroughly aired and suspend judgment until all the facts are known. If irregularities were committed, they served the company's purposes beautifully by dragging a red herring across the real issues. One is whether a company with $40,000,000 in defense orders is not under obligation to meet its workers half-way in peaceful settlements of disputes. The other is whether Knudsen is to be allowed to use the prestige of his office for strikebreaking purposes.

Vichy's True Colors

IN A moving and illuminating article in the April *Atlantic Monthly,* Raoul de Roussy de Sales, well-known French newspaperman, points out that while the Vichy regime claims to be saving France "as a living entity," it has repudiated "some of the essential ideas which made France live." It is this which shakes the confidence of so many Frenchmen in Marshal Pétain and his colleagues—this "willingness to collaborate with the Nazis not only in practical matters but also morally and politically." We see it in their outlawry of the slogans of the French revolution, in their efforts to stifle free opinion, in their shamefaced adoption of anti-Semitic laws.

We see it, too, in their willingness to assist the dictators in hounding the tens of thousands of hapless refugees who have become trapped in unoccupied France. The latest and most disgraceful example is the ban on the departure of 348 Spaniards bound for Mexico. These refugees were emigrating in accordance with an agreement made between Mexico and France last August. They all had passports with valid exit visas, but when the ship was ready to sail it was boarded by French police and all Spaniards of military age were ordered ashore. This action directly violates pledges given to the Mexican government and it accentuates the despair of 30,000 Spaniards who believed that they would be allowed to sail to the New World as soon as transport was available. The Vichy government cannot excuse this action, as it has excused the detention of German and Italian refugees, by reference to the terms of the armistice. It is under no obligations to Franco to prevent Spaniards leaving France and its behavior can only be explained by anxiety to curry favor with a hanger-on of the Axis.

In the ears of Hitler, too, such deeds speak louder than all verbal promises of collaboration, for they precipitate Vichy toward the same abyss of moral degradation which has long been the undisputed Nazi *Lebensraum.* They should also help to convince the outside world that when Pétain offers his hand to Hitler it is not so much an involuntary gesture as the act of a man who has invested his moral capital in Nazi victory and is hoping for quick dividends. As Fernand de Brinon, Vichy's agent in Paris, reported after a recent interview with the Marshal: "He is convinced that France must participate in the creation of a new European order and that is why he hopes to be able to work toward that end with victorious Germany." If that is Pétain's conviction, it is one the French people do not share. Their beliefs were voiced better by that spontaneous demonstration in Marseilles after the Yugoslav defiance of Hitler.

There are still many people in this country, including officials of the State Department, who close their eyes to the true character of Vichy. They disregard the incon-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sistencies in which the Pétain government has become involved by its attempt to combine claims to an independent status with the adoption of Nazi ideology. Mr. de Roussy de Sales, in the article previously quoted, catalogues a number of these inconsistencies. We have space only for one example: "Finally, it is not consistent to try to conciliate the traditional policy of Franco-American friendship and the ambiguous acceptance of the Nazi order in Europe when America has formally notified the world that it would not accept the establishment of that order."

Vichy's efforts to achieve this difficult straddle have been encouraged by altogether too much sympathy in this country. We have received Ambassador Henry-Haye as the free agent of a free state, overlooking his appeasing past and his still more dubious present. It is true he suppresses his pro-Nazi sentiments in public. But his propaganda against the British blockade and his omission of any reference to Nazi responsibility for French sufferings indicate clearly the primary source of his orders.

In pleading for American assistance in feeding France the Vichy government has again and again promised every kind of control to insure that food will not reach Germany. It is difficult, however, to place any reliance on official statements regarding the situation. When Admiral Darlan threatened to break the British blockade, he implied that all food shipments were being stopped and he contrasted the British attitude with German generosity in releasing requisitioned wheat in the occupied area. Now he has himself given particulars of imports into France between October and February including 260,000 tons of grain, 5,000 tons of meat, 180,000 tons of peanut oil, and 135,000 tons of fruit. Further, it has been officially made known in Vichy that the "generous" German gesture was really part and parcel of a barter arrangement made many months ago by which the occupied zone sends wheat, sugar, and potatoes to the unoccupied area in return for cattle, table oil, vegetables, cheese, and other products. As the Germans have the right of requisition in the occupied area this arrangement no doubt contributes usefully to their rations.

The arrangement goes far to justify the British contention that it is impossible to send supplies to France without favorably affecting the German position. We may well ask, therefore, why these facts remained hidden during the recent negotiations over the dispatch of food to France. The State Department has now asked Ambassador Leahy to make a full report concerning the exchanges between the occupied and unoccupied territories. We hope he insists on obtaining all the facts on the food stocks, imports, and exports of unoccupied France and on the activities of the German purchasing commission at Marseilles. That is information to which we are entitled, whether or not the Nazis object to its disclosure, before we are asked to urge Britain to modify its blockade.

Matsuoka's Visit

IF Yosuke Matsuoka, the Japanese Foreign Minister, went to Berlin and Rome to obtain assurances regarding an Axis victory before committing Japan to parallel action in the Pacific, his visit could not have been more unfortunately timed. He arrived in Berlin about six hours before the Yugoslav people had dealt Germany its most serious diplomatic setback of recent years. Between that time and the date scheduled for his elaborate reception in Rome, Italy suffered its most severe defeat of the war in Africa as well as a catastrophic blow to its fleet. These setbacks have undoubtedly increased the desire of the Axis partners to have Japan enter the war. In fact Japanese participation has become essential if the Axis is to deal a knockout blow against the British Empire before American assistance irrevocably turns the tide.

But it is increasingly difficult to see what the European Axis partners can offer Matsuoka that will overcome the doubts which led him to make his European trip. Military and naval assistance is out of the question. The strained relations which have arisen between Berlin and Moscow over the Balkans reduce the possibility that Germany can be of any help in bringing about the desired Soviet-Japanese non-aggression pact. Recent Axis defeats are also bound to curtail German influence in China. On the other side of the picture, Japan must take into account the fact that Britain's recent Mediterranean and African victories will permit it to strengthen its Far Eastern defenses. Additional British and Indian troops have recently arrived at Singapore to supplement the Australian and New Zealand forces dispatched there a few weeks ago. The Mediterranean naval victory may even permit a few light naval units to be sent into the Indian Ocean. Certainly the likelihood of American action to check further Japanese aggression has not been reduced. It has been intimated that in the event of an attack on Singapore, the United States might transfer to Britain some of the cruisers and destroyers now in Far Eastern waters.

In face of these difficulties Japanese entry into the war seems unlikely. Without doubt Japan will set about consolidating its position in Thailand and Indo-China so as to be prepared for any future opportunity. But its primary efforts will probably be directed toward liquidation of the disastrous "China incident." If China is to be destroyed, obviously this must be done before the United States either stops the flow of war materials to Japan or renders effective aid to Chungking. The danger of such an attack must not be minimized. Japan has been gravely weakened by four years of war; but so has China. Faced by a concerted Japanese attack, China may go down before the United States gets around to giving the assistance that has long been promised but never delivered.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yugoslav Explosion

BY STOYAN PRIBICHEVICH

IN THIS war the greatest casualties have occurred so far among civilians and prophets. Just last week experts and authorities were interpreting the Yugoslav surrender at Vienna, which they had long foretold, when overnight they had to rearrange their arguments to explain an event inexplicable to them: the furious, wholehearted defiance of Hitler's *Diktat* by a peasant nation of 16,000,000 almost entirely surrounded by Axis armies. Only a few of us had insisted publicly that under no conditions would the Yugoslavs accept a pact with the Axis and permit the passage of German munitions for use against the Greeks and the British. This apparently naive opinion was based, not on any inside information, but merely on a knowledge of the character and temperament of the people.

The Belgrade military coup of March 27 marks the first failure of Hitler's technique in the war of nerves: by putting on steam he provoked an explosion, and for the first time had a treaty torn up by somebody else. The primitive mind of the Serbian peasant usually makes instant courageous decisions in a crisis, because it sees each problem in its simplest terms. On the other hand the Nazis, shrewd and ruthless but singularly unimaginative, disregarded two essential qualities of the Serbs: their almost morbid feeling for the sacredness of their soil, and their capacity for accumulating hatred until it quivers, incandescent, in the air.

It is unfair to say that the former Regent, Prince Paul, or former Premier Cvetkovich, was pro-Nazi. The only influential Serbian pro-Nazi, Stoyadinovich, was delivered by them into Greek hands even during the negotiations with Hitler. Actually, the situation was simplicity itself: practically all Serbs are anti-Nazi; some have guts, some haven't; those who happened to be in the government hadn't—and they were overthrown.

Preparations for the revolt which put young King Peter and General Simovich in power must have been under way ("just in case") ever since the Nazi occupation of Bulgaria on March 1. For the coup was executed with such swiftness and precision that it caught both the Yugoslav and the German governments unawares, and not even the Gestapo had wind of it. Had Hitler understood Serbian psychology, he would have marched in the moment he heard of the initial street riots. He waited complacently for two days—and was irreparably late.

Of course, the boy king, Peter II—grandson of the heroic World War king, Peter I—is a symbol. The actual rulers now are the generals who as young officers drove the Germans out of Serbia in 1918. With them in the Cabinet sit representatives of the Serbian democratic and agrarian parties, most of whom were national revolutionaries against Austria-Hungary. Vladimir Matchek, veteran chief of the powerful Croatian Peasant Party, quietly moved from Prince Paul's into King Peter's government, but at the time this is written he has not yet announced whether he will remain in the Cabinet.

It is glib to write, as some correspondents have, that the Croats are less anti-Nazi than the Serbs. The point is that, while they are more appreciative of democracy, they are less aggressive physically; and that their provinces, full of farms and industries and located in the flat northwest, are the most exposed and the least defensible. To make matters more difficult, the Croatian fascist, Ante Pavelich, who organized the assassination of King Alexander in 1934, is now an Italian guest, and is available for duty as a Croatian satrap under any Axis occupation. This, then, is Matchek's dilemma in case of war: to have Croatia hopelessly devastated or be regarded as a backstabber by the Serbs. Out of natural common sense, he is likely to remain Vice-Premier or to leave some of his lieutenants in the present Cabinet, especially if the new regime confirms the autonomous status of Croatia. But as long as Yugoslav troops command the borders German propaganda for Croatian secession on the Czechoslovak model has little chance of success. And in the event of war, most of the Croatian territory would have to be abandoned in any case.

To all German warnings the government headed by Dusan Simovitch is almost certain to reply repeatedly that it is resolved on strict neutrality and that the agreement signed by former Premier Cvetkovich cannot be fulfilled because it is contrary to the will of the Yugoslav people. For Hitler, on the other hand, retreat is now impossible. But the customary Nazi technique of threats and vilification, far from mollifying the Serbs, would at this point exasperate them to white heat. A Balkan war therefore seems inevitable in the near future.

The greatest part of Yugoslavia's 1,200,000 men have been moving south for some time. For the probable Yugoslav strategy will be to throw the Italians out of Albania, give up the northern and northwestern provinces to the Germans, and retreat into the wild mountains of Bosnia, Montenegro, Central Serbia, and Macedonia, where German tanks and motorized columns would not be of much use. If such a maneuver were carried out, the seasoned Greek troops in Albania could be thrown eastward into Thrace, and the Germans in Bulgaria would find themselves outflanked by the Yugoslavs. Whatever the outcome, the Germans would have to employ huge masses of men and matériel—and in no case could they prevent one disastrous result: destruction of Balkan foodstuffs and raw materials which the Reich has long depended upon. Even if the Nazis conquer the Balkan mainland, yet without the Greek islands and a Mediterranean fleet they will scarcely have advanced in the war against the British Empire.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chungking and Washington

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, March 27

SOMEONE seems to have sold the isolationist news letter, *Uncensored,* a bill of goods. The March 22 issue reports that "In Washington close observers have noted a weakening of the Administration's eagerness to stand up to Japan—regarding China. The reason is not of course that anyone loves Japan the more. And there are factors other than the possibility of a Soviet-Japanese agreement. The report brought back from China by special emissary Lauchlin Currie was discouraging. For one thing Currie is said to have been impressed by the split inside China. He is also said to have discovered that too large a portion of the money the United States has loaned to China has found its way into the private pockets of members of the Chungking government. Quite possibly it was the Currie report which led the President to soft-pedal aid to China in his speech on March 15. He did not speak of China in quite the same way he spoke of Britain and Greece." This is not an accurate description of Mr. Roosevelt's attitude or of the Currie report.

It is possible from Administration and Chinese sources to obtain some idea of Currie's impressions. This story is an attempt to collate these scraps for what they may be worth. Currie came back rather more optimistic than otherwise, and his is one of the Administration's most discerning minds. One gathers that Chiang Kai-shek immensely impressed Currie by his astuteness, his austerity and his awareness of his own historic role and mission. In him China for the first time has a truly national leader. The seriousness of recent clashes between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists is not underestimated, but it is felt that they are not in as critical a stage as they were. Whether the improvement will continue remains to be seen, and depends in part on the extent to which Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union can arrive at some measure of parallel action in the East. It seems agreed that the Soviet government has been "scrupulously correct" in its dealing with Chungking. In a paradoxical way, renewed strife between Kuomintang and Communists reflects some improvement in Chinese conditions; cooperation is easy enough when the situation seems desperate; jockeying for position begins when prospects improve. China's upper crust is as resistant as our own to social and economic reforms, though the Chinese Communist program is a rural New Deal rather than Sovietism. That this is well understood in the West was reflected in the dismay voiced even by our conservative press over the split, and the comment of such papers as the New York *Times* had a good effect in Chungking. Popular morale and guerrilla warfare within the Japanese occupied territory were hurt by the clashes with the Kuomintang, but the Generalissimo's speech before the People's Political Council is regarded as conciliatory and giving promise of peace.

Mr. Roosevelt did not "soft-pedal" aid to China in his March 15 speech. On the contrary, he promised more strongly than he has in the past to extend help to that country. The Chinese need more than we have been giving them, but the raw materials, artillery and planes required bulk very small amid the huge totals of the Lease-Lend Act. The chief artery for these supplies remains the Burma Road. Though Japanese planes operating from bases in French Indo-China may soon provide a new danger to the road, the Chinese are confident that they can keep it open. Bombed sections of the road are repaired in three hours and broken bridges replaced with pontoons or ferries in a day's time. The road has carried less freight than it should have because of the poor organization of traffic on it, not because of Japanese bombings. J. E. Baker, formerly head of the American Red Cross in China, has been appointed Director General of the Burma Road and expects to organize travel upon it more efficiently.

The Chinese have obtained more supplies from the Soviets than from America, but the prestige of the United States is much higher than that of any other country. The Japanese have gone as far as they can in China without getting into mountainous country and river gorges where their superior mechanical equipment would be of little use. Chinese guerrillas and irregular armies operate within so-called Japanese-occupied territory. Clashes between the central government and the Communists have had a bad effect on this guerrilla activity, for these roving bands live upon the countryside, and the tax and land reforms instituted by the Communists had tended to raise morale. Small enterprises were not interfered with in Communist territory but a progressive tax was laid on landholdings according to their size, and local democratic institutions were established.

It is hard to get a picture of just what is the difference in theory between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist programs, both groups basing themselves on Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles." The central government, as the only agency in Free China which can command adequate credit, has embarked on many large-scale

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

government-owned enterprises. But Chiang's greatness is as the unifier and leader of China; he has just begun to learn first lessons in democracy and social reform. China's gentry must pay a price for the struggles of China's common people if China's defense is to be effective, and in this its problem is not so unlike that of the older democracies.

In this respect we are only beginning to get rid of the mote in our own eye. The habit of exporting encouraging speeches to China and war materials to Japan is dying out slowly. Exports to Japan in January were 40 per cent below December and the lowest for any month since August, 1936. It is nevertheless interesting to note in the latest Department of Commerce report on trade with the Far East that exports to Japan in January were three times as great as to China, and that exports to China have been declining and are about half of what they were a year ago. The Department's figures exaggerate our shipments to Free China, for Chinese representatives estimate that easily four-fifths of the $4,670,000 in goods shipped to China went to areas under Japanese control. It is also useful to recall that the $100,000,000 in loans promised China on November 30 have not yet been made available, though this is expected soon. So far the total of our loans to China is $65,000,000, a figure which makes our rhetoric seem a little shabby.

While exports were down in January, Japan took huge quantities of copper and lead, both now placed under licensing because of their scarcity and the need for them in the defense program. Licensing, of course, is not the same as an embargo, though one is often confused with the other. The State Department refuses to make information on licenses public and there is no way to find out what licenses are being granted. The oil companies are still doing a big business with Japan. Exports of petroleum to Japan totaled more than $3,500,000 in January and continue at a high level, though the companies are becoming more and more worried about the publicity attending the business. I have before me a photostat of a Standard-Vacuum bill of lading for 265,200 gallons of Pennsylvania-emblem motor oil to be shipped aboard the Tusima Maru from New York harbor "about March 23/24." It is marked, "No Socony shield or mention of company name to appear on package."

Battle of the Atlantic

BY DONALD W. MITCHELL

BOTH Allied and Axis powers admit that 1941 is the critical year of World War II. If the British can hold out against Hitler this year, an ever-increasing volume of American ships and planes will be at their disposal to help turn the tide in 1942 and succeeding years. Conversely, the Axis, its forces not only weakened by blockade but spread over Europe because of the necessity of dominating a large and hostile subject population, will find its chances of victory materially diminishing.

But will aid in 1942 be too late? Hitler's military and diplomatic triumphs, British bravery against aerial attack, and the brilliant successes of the Greeks and British against the Italians in the Mediterranean have been the featured news of the past year of war. Much less spectacular but of probably greater importance has been the struggle at sea. Here a steady toll of sinkings, not as large as in any one month of the World War but with the same cumulative effect, has whittled away the margin of British security. Great Britain may be defeated on the land or even in the air and still survive, but should Germany succeed in completely disrupting the transport of British food and supplies the result will be either starvation or surrender.

Nothing is more dangerous than the assumption that the present war at sea is roughly parallel to that of the last war. During April, 1917, nearly a million tons of shipping were sent to the bottom of the Atlantic. An Allied defeat by November of that year was prophesied by the Germans and fully expected by the British leaders. Then the adoption of convoys, at the suggestion of Admiral Sims, cut submarine losses among convoyed ships by 90 per cent. The arrival of American destroyers and patrol vessels, the invention of reliable hydrophones for anti-submarine ships, and the laying of mine barrages in the North Sea and the Straits of Dover, only outlets to the Atlantic trade lanes for German submarines, first checked losses of merchant tonnage, then increased the toll on *untersee* boats, and finally caused such loss of morale among the German crews that cocked revolvers in the hands of their officers would not induce sailors to go aboard the doomed vessels.

At the beginning of the present war naval authorities were inclined to feel that any effort Germany made to gain command of the sea or to cut trade lanes would have no more than a nuisance value. They regarded the situation as comparable to that of the World War, and contended that the defenses against the submarine had been discovered then and that now it was merely necessary to apply them. The surprisingly long list of sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

marines destroyed and the relatively light loss of merchant tonnage during the early months of the present war confirmed this view. Even without the Russian, Italian, Japanese, and American aid which it had in the World War, and with a considerably smaller force, the Royal navy appeared to have the situation well in hand.

However, the German campaigns in Norway and France altered the situation inasmuch as they not only eliminated hostile land power from the continent of Europe but radically changed, in Germany's favor, the factors governing success in the war at sea. So many and far-reaching were the alterations in the conditions of sea warfare that few writers, even among naval men, appeared to grasp the full implications of all of them. And by the general public they were practically unnoticed.

The most obvious change, of course, related to German bases. Whereas these had once been concentrated along a narrow strip of North Sea coast, where their very crowding invited attack, they are now strung along the coastline from Norway to Spain—an achievement which greatly complicates the problem of successful enemy attack. But this is not the main advantage Germany derives from these new bases. Two of the three main anti-submarine devices of the World War—mine barrages and patrol vessels armed with listening devices—were effective only because they operated in comparatively narrow waters through which the U-boats were forced to pass. These narrow waters are no longer a condition of the sea war. Now that Germany has easy and direct access to the trade lanes of the Atlantic, its submarines do not have to run the gantlet of minefields and patrols before reaching their hunting grounds. Minefields in the North Sea and the Dover Straits have therefore become nearly valueless, and it would be dangerous to lay them near the French coast, in proximity to German air bases. With minefields close inshore out of the question and distant ones no longer effective, the greatest single threat to enemy morale has been dissipated.

The elimination of French sea power and Italy's entrance into the war have been too lightly regarded. Italian ships may have made far greater use of their extreme speed to escape action than they have of their offensive capacity. Nevertheless, the loss of French help has forced Great Britain to concentrate much of its navy in the Mediterranean. And because of the larger numbers of Italian submarines and the comparative absence of British air bases there, the ships in demand have been destroyers and submarines, the two classes that the British could least easily spare from the Atlantic.

It would thus be extremely unwise to view the Italian navy's recent losses as a heavy blow to Hitler. The mere existence of a reasonably strong Italian "fleet in being" drew warships into the Mediterranean at a time when Britain vitally needed them in the Atlantic for anti-submarine and convoy duties. Furthermore, the inability to make use of the bases in western Ireland, which proved so useful in 1917 and 1918, has compelled escorting ships to make about twice as long a trip on each voyage. Forced to these unusual exertions in an attempt to do the work of several times their number, both ships and men are being rapidly worn out by overwork. Germans have naturally attacked the destroyers whenever possible, and even according to British figures, have sunk at least forty. Meanwhile, experienced seamen have become so few that the manning of the fifty destroyers sent by the United States had to wait for several weeks until crews could be gathered. Lacking destroyers, of which they now have only about one-half the number with which they finished the war of 1914-18, the British have armed old tramp steamers, pressed into service trawlers and drifters, and invented a new and cheaper class of anti-submarine vessel known as the corvette. But sinkings continue to mount.

Not only the submarine danger, but danger from surface raiders has greatly increased. During the World War raiders were at least forced to run a blockade in the North Sea. They must still do so but the task is infinitely easier since their proximity to air bases in Norway has compelled Britain virtually to abandon its strongholds in the Orkneys and northern Scotland, and since the Royal navy, with a much weaker force than once used to watch the 230 miles of sea lane between Scotland and Norway, can scarcely hope to make a continental blockade airtight. The belligerency of Italy has at the same time immobilized the very battle-cruisers and plane-carriers that would be most useful against commerce raiders.

So far, the British have apparently resisted the natural temptation to disperse their forces widely over a large area. As a result, their losses from the forays of German pocket-battleships, cruisers, and armed merchantmen in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans have gone up to startling figures; several entire convoys have been intercepted and badly mangled. Yet battleship protection is hardly possible. It is highly significant that the loss of the Graf Spee has been the only major German casualty in this phase of war and that that loss occurred when the strategic position at sea was very different from what it is today.

Aerial warfare against commerce has proved disappointing to many aviation enthusiasts who have long insisted that the bomber had spelled the doom of the battleship. According to both British and German figures the ship losses due to planes have been less than a third of the whole. This, however, is probably due in part to the fact that the giant German air force is notably deficient in large long-range bombers. At any rate, German planes have found their greatest value in scouting for merchantmen and reporting their location and course by radio to nearby submarines. The advent of aerial scouting has thus nearly destroyed the utility of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

World War device of using irregular routes and times of sailing.

The seriousness of the present emergency would be hard for an outsider to estimate. Figures of total losses are no longer released by the British Admiralty; those of the Germans are subject to heavy discount. Nevertheless, the indications are that they are enormous. The best American students of sea warfare estimate them at at least 5,000,000 tons or about one-fourth of the pre-war merchant marine; German figures run close to 9,000,000 tons. Added to the outright losses has been the burden on overcrowded dockyards of repairing damaged ships at a time when German air raids are aimed especially at shipping centers. Some of these losses have been replaced by the million tons of merchant shipping the United States sold Britain and by French, Dutch, Norwegian, Belgian, and Danish tonnage taken over. But countering these gains are the significant facts that the war has vastly increased the needs of ocean transport, that the Mediterranean lifeline has been largely abandoned for commercial use, and that the necessities of the convoy system itself, with its waits for escorts, reductions of speed to that of the slowest unit, and zigzag steering, have decreased the effectiveness of a given tonnage by at least 20 to 30 per cent. So serious is the emergency that British spokesmen in the United States have almost ceased emphasizing airplanes in the growing urgency of their demand for ships, and they have scraped the boneyards clean, purchasing every bottom conceivably useful.

Critical as the present situation is, there is no proof whatever that it will not steadily become worse. With a stronger industrial machine, more abundant resources and shipyards, and less need to produce for land war, there is no reason why German production of submarines should not far surpass the twelve to fifteen per month achieved during the best period of the last war. In fact, if reports of the mass building of tiny, standardized boats with just enough cruising radius to reach the hunting grounds west of Ireland are at all correct, forty to fifty ships a month might well be turned out. Since the runs are shorter, the proportion of ships at sea at any one time could conceivably reach one-third, far more than the 10 to 15 per cent usually active during 1917 and 1918. The provision of enough trained crews offers a more serious problem, but not one incapable of solution. If rumors of increased production of the new Focke-Wulf long-range bomber are accurate, air power also may well offer a much more formidable threat than has heretofore been the case.

The main feature of the German *Blitzkrieg* has not been the invention of any new weapons but rather the greatly improved and more imaginative use of old ones. Today virtually every condition in the war against commerce is drastically different from the circumstances of the World War. Even German technique has greatly improved. A single submarine of the World War has given place to fleets of submarines, a single torpedo to entire salvos. It is probable that sound detectors have been improved to the point where U-boats are firing by sound alone without the risk of raising their periscopes above the surface. In 1917 Great Britain found answers to the submarine, then a new weapon, barely in time to escape defeat. To 1941 problems these 1918 answers have become as inadequate as was French employment of 1918 ideas in land warfare last spring.

By one of the curious parallels in which history abounds, American aid in World War II, as in World War I, is coming at a time when Great Britain faces defeat. The lending of mosquito and patrol craft and the building within three to four months of perhaps hundreds of additional submarine-chasers and torpedo boats are the most obvious measures of American aid now being undertaken. Coordination of British and American shipping to bring about the most favorable possible use of existing tonnage is also inevitable. Great Britain itself is taking steps to insure more rapid and efficient handling of merchant tonnage. Since ships take months or years to build, shipbuilding to replace lost tonnage cannot at once become effective. However, there is a noticeable speeding up here, together with R. A. F. attempts to cripple progress at German shipyards and bases.

Another suggestion of aid involves the use of American merchantmen in convoys, with United States warships serving as escorts. From a positive angle, such a course of action would augment considerably the protection now given convoys and increase the number of vessels which could be safeguarded. On the other hand, it would certainly involve loss of American ships and lives and the definite abandonment of the comforting legal fiction that the United States is not, after all, at war. The Administration is therefore weighing the idea with great caution. A more conservative plan, the loaning of additional warships to Britain, would avoid these psychological perils but would be much less effective, since one of England's greatest shortages is in skilled crews. By either method the extent of American aid would be more limited than many imagine, since large forces of destroyers are required with the Pacific and Asiatic fleets, the only really effective deterrent to a southward push by Japan. Nevertheless, the emergency is so critical that one of these schemes may have to be adopted.

Yet there is no assurance that any of these steps by themselves will be adequate. Will the British navy, traditionally conservative, find a successful defense against the submarine menace of 1941? In 1917 it was American ideas and invention rather than American material aid that brought ultimate victory. And again today the fate of Britain hangs on the rapid invention of new means to overcome heavy shipping losses.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bombs Over the Hedgerows

BY CHARLES DUFF

London, March 10 (By Clipper)

IT IS comparatively easy for a trained observer, or one with good natural instincts, to estimate the psychological atmosphere of London or that of any of the big English provincial towns or cities in time of war. To do as much for the countryside is far more difficult, and the countryside, though almost ignored, is hardly less important. After all, it produces much food; it would bear the brunt of invasion; and it is the home now of hundreds of thousands of evacuees from the metropolis and the danger areas. Why it should be so neglected by journalists and correspondents I do not know, but this is a good enough excuse for my own observations.

In June, 1938, an Austrian friend and myself were discussing England's power of resistance in the event of war with Germany, which we both regarded as inevitable. He said: "If Hitler bombs London, he will do the job thoroughly; and this great soft monster will soon collapse. As a people, the English have had no first-hand experience of war. They have never had it on their doorsteps. From long prosperity and security at home they have developed qualities which do not offer wonderful prospects of resistance. In this they are unlike the Irish and the Spaniards—or even the French—and I shudder to think what will happen to your great city if there are serious air raids."

I had heard the same thesis before, especially from Nazis, all of whom seemed to think that England had grown too fat to fight successfully in the sort of *Blitzkrieg* they had in mind. Of course I disagreed—for reasons which have so far proved correct. The English are not a soft race, individually or collectively; and they may be counted upon to fight not only tenaciously but even ferociously to defend their homes, their mode of life, and their existence. It is not easy to find a tougher customer than the average London Cockney, whose morale, staying power, and dry, sardonic humor in the most adverse circumstances often evoked my admiration in the last war. I noticed then that even in a helter-skelter retreat they never lost their heads. There was certainly a lot of cussing and swearing; but signs of panic—never.

I lived through all that heavy bombing of London which began on last September 7 (without once going to an air-raid shelter) and saw precisely the same qualities that I saw in 1914-18. Londoners were grim, quiet—and very angry—all indications of good morale. The general feeling was: "If only we could hit back." There was a certain amount of awe at the barbarity of those first big raids when the Germans, engaged in "area bombing" by night, razed churches, hospitals, schools, great office buildings, and the humble dwellings of the poor, in a way that the quick-witted Cockneys instinctively recognized as having terrorism as the chief military purpose. They seemed to know that Hitler's advisers had told him a story similar to that expounded by my Austrian friend, and they drew upon their rich spiritual resources to prove how wrong it was. In about a fortnight or three weeks the spirit of London resembled the spirit of Madrid, as I had known it during the Spanish war. There is no need to disguise the fact that life was difficult and sometimes chaotic, but the ordinary people rose above officialdom and bureaucracy and solved problem after problem for themselves. They worked like a rather good football team. There has never been a better example of what Kropotkin calls "mutual aid." Everybody helped everybody; the amount of looting was negligible, considering the population; and the stoicism of the people and the nightly heroism of workers and the services had epic qualities. Terrorism has failed in this war so far as England is concerned. It failed in London; it fails in the ports and industrial areas. It will also fail in the countryside.

In recent weeks Hitler has devoted some attention to country towns, villages, hamlets, and even to farms and isolated spots. I was myself in due course bombed out of my London apartment and decided I would sleep in the country until I could get another home organized. And so I have taken advantage of the respite to study the countryside. Every evening I talk to small-town dwellers, villagers, farm laborers, and others, some of whom have not visited a city many times in their lives. I find them quite a different breed from the Londoners—but not less interesting.

The town on the outskirts of which I live is in the center of an agricultural district and normally has about 11,000 inhabitants. With evacuees and bombed-out folk like myself, it now has about 20,000. One Sunday not long ago I was out for a stroll with a friend when two planes appeared amid the low-lying clouds. I suspected they belonged to the enemy, but was not sure. Suddenly there was the roar of exploding bombs. The planes swept directly overhead at a height of a few hundred feet—I saw the hooded head of the pilot of one clearly—and made off. In the distance was the wasp-like noise of our own fighters, and soon we heard the rattle of machine-gun fire. Later we were informed that a raider had been brought down.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That evening I went out for my usual ramble and visited a little roadside beerhouse frequented almost exclusively by poor small-farmers and farm laborers—about the simplest people one can find in England. I expected the conversation to turn upon that daylight raid, the first which our town had experienced. But no. Nobody even mentioned it, until I did. And then it was dismissed with testy remarks such as: "Those bloody Germans have a cheek to come here in broad daylight. Much good it does them bombing a place like this!" In another town a few miles away a German plane came on market day—Hitler's *Luftwaffe* has not forgotten the lesson of Guernica—and reduced a few houses to rubble, killed seven people, and wounded a score. It machine-gunned the marketers and stall-holders. A man who had a fish stall in the street showed me two bullet holes in the tray of his scales. "Can you beat it," he said. "Another foot to the left and he'd have got me. He hit a codfish on my stall, and if the price hadn't been fixed I coulda sold it for double in souvenir steaks." The point about all this is not that the country people seem more phlegmatic than the Londoners (which one might expect) but that their morale is as strong, even if they are perhaps not so quick in the uptake as Londoners, not so instinctively ready in team work. I began to speculate on what their behavior would be in the event of invasion.

Apart from the presence (especially in the evenings and at week-ends) of a few thousand extra inhabitants, one would not notice any difference in our town between times of peace and of war. A little more shopping activity, more aimless walking in the streets, bigger queues for the two cinemas and, of course, the food shortage—that is all. The food shortage sounds far worse than it is, and is chiefly in butchers' meat. Only twice in recent weeks have our butchers' shops been short of the ration allowance and then the allowance turned up a few days later. One can always buy other meats: hares, rabbits, fowls, fish, which are not rationed. In short, we have not really felt the food shortage. The carnivorous who can afford the money may go to a restaurant and have a good meat meal and then go home and eat their own rations. If they wanted they could go from one restaurant to another and gorge to repletion. Nobody expects that condition to last. It is unfair on the poor, and it is not only the poor who criticize it. Sometimes you can't get your favorite brand of cigarettes or tobacco; but you always have something to choose from. Prices of clothes have gone up and there's a purchase tax, but I find no profiteering to compare with that which was common in 1914-18. The ordinary English people, on the whole, seem to have developed a better civic sense, especially in regard to petty profiteering and speculating. This is not to say that these evils do not exist. Onions have been sold at two shillings a pound. Leeks went to some appalling price. But, in the main, the grounds for complaint are few. This is true not only in London but in every town and village I have visited. Perhaps the storekeepers realize that the public is not in a mood to stand much nonsense (and it certainly is not); so they may not have a very much better civic sense after all.

Underneath the surface of life there is the quiet, persistent activity of war preparations. The town where I sleep and live at week-ends is proceeding to perfect its organization and defenses, but one sees very little evidence of either. There are I do not know how many town and country folk in the Home Guard, and with this is incorporated a fair leaven of old soldiers who saw active service in the last war—seasoned men, who have been under fire, bombardment, and in gas attacks, men who know military routine from A to Z. They have all had refresher courses and training in modern methods of guerrilla warfare.

The Home Guard is as near as England has ever got to a democratic army, and there is an excellent spirit prevailing between officers and men. This is a fortunate state of affairs in a corps which consists of all classes, creeds, and conditions. Indeed the men would not work with officers whom they disliked. In the Home Guard the lawyer, the company director, the farm laborer, and the newspaper-seller train alongside one another; and the man who is boss in the daytime may be taking orders from his employee in the evening. The general social significance of this leveling out is incalculable, and if there is no invasion, England should have good reason to thank Hitler for the threat of it. I meet many Home Guardsmen and have been struck by the way they have toughened up in recent months. One can hardly expect storm-trooper qualities from them, but I imagine that, should invasion come, they will provide many surprises. Some of them are expert at their jobs: as machine-gunners, grenade-throwers, and riflemen. All are volunteers and proud of their uniform. The majority of the men guarding key points are of the regular army, and they have been instructed to die rather than yield an inch. They will have the whole of the population behind them in this part of the countryside; there will be no panic, even if gas and flame-throwers are used, but a stolid, intelligent, and tenacious resistance, at times of a ferocity that may come as a shock to those who have not looked deeply into the English soul. "Let us get face to face with the Germans and we'll slaughter them," is a common sentiment.

As regards the general behavior of the civil population, many of the evacuees are women and children and they may be expected to "stay put" in the event of invasion. They will remain indoors. The townsfolk may be divided into two categories: those who will stay home and adopt passive resistance, following the official instructions which are to be distributed any day now; and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an incalculable number who may be counted upon not to resist the temptation to do something. I have met dozens of men who say: "It's all very fine to be told just to stay home by the fireside if the Germans come. I don't know what I'll do, but I'll do *something*. There's bound to be some mopping up wanted." While the spirit behind all this is good, the military nuisance value may be in proportion. There is another certainty: the people in these country towns and villages have had the lessons of Belgium and France so dinned into them that they will never clutter up the roads.

In one respect there is a striking difference between London and the countryside: that of political outlook. In London it is impossible to avoid hearing among the ordinary population views to the effect that after the war there must be a fundamental change in political structure, tending toward an undefined socialism. But even in London I find little evidence of a semi-revolutionary feeling. There is a vague yearning for a leveling out of the gross inequalities of life—those inequalities which that first month's heavy bombing brought into sharp relief. In London and, I understand, in the big provincial cities and industrial districts and bombed ports, the prism of war is splitting social thought into a spectrum in which the colors stand out in violent contrast. In both London and the countryside it is realized that bureaucracy is stifling democracy, but whereas something may be done about it in the big cities, the countryside is unlikely to be greatly moved.

The people in my town and countryside are ultra-Conservatives down to the humblest farm laborer, and Labor or even Liberal town councilors are looked at askance and almost as reds. Here the church and land-owning influences are considerable—and reactionary. To me, who have lived for years in London, it is odd to feel that unpopularity or worse is the reward of some opinion that would pass unnoticed in the metropolis. Here there is hardly an adverse word or thought about the politicians responsible for Munich, and to talk of that episode as a betrayal produces a hostile silence. Having sensed the hostility, I get out of it by remarking: "Well, thank God we have Churchill"—with which there is unanimous agreement. Churchill's latest broadcast was listened to with religious awe. Of course Russia is outside the pale. Here, the Communist is a monster and the Conservative a gentleman. That, in general, expresses the spirit of this countryside. London is not England—any more than New York is the United States. Perhaps less so.

Since taxation and borrowing are not solving the twin problems of financing the war and decreasing civilian consumption, the rationing of spending money is now being talked of, with a 25/- per week limit for everybody.
HALL OF PATRIOTIC SELF-DENIAL
25/- a week
BULKY VALUABLES MAY BE LEFT IN KINDERSLEY'S CLOAK ROOM
SPENDING COUPON

THE RICH PASS THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Opportunists

BY CHRISTOPHER LA FARGE

THE Opportunists are individuals, without any official connections, who will get you a government order for goods to be used in the defense program —at a price. They have appeared in force in southern New England, one of the largest centers of armament production in the country, since last July. I know that fifteen pairs of them (they work in pairs as a rule) have turned up here in Rhode Island; and that, from their own accounts, they have not limited themselves to this territory. They cover a wide field in an anxious time.

The price for which the Opportunists will work varies from 2 to 10 per cent of the gross amount of the orders procured. If they can secure for a factory an order for $100,000 worth of gun-carriages (that sum to include a profit for the manufacturer) the eventual cost to the army or the navy may be as much as $110,000. This increase in cost the Opportunists would justify on the ground that, acting as a clearing-house and information center in a time of disorganization and confusion, they have expedited both the placing and the completion of defense contracts.

As far back as May, 1940, some of the Opportunists saw their chance and organized, though most of them began in July or August. They work in teams—composed, usually, of two men, one of whom is an engineer of sorts—management or industrial—and the other a sales promoter, or contact man. The better organized pairs carry elaborately prepared catalogues which list the equipment of those plants they claim as "clients." The plants are identified only by an unrevealing key number, for the common practice is to show or give this catalogue freely to manufacturers to consult in case they need supplementary equipment in order to put through a complex defense order. Thus, one manufacturer may not have Bullard lathes and may need them badly. In the Opportunists' catalogue he finds a plant having Bullards. If he can sub-contract part of his order to the other plant he gets his work finished and the Opportunists collect their commission from the plant that had the Bullards. It is obvious that the plants so catalogued must be anonymous, for otherwise what would prevent a direct contact between the two manufacturers, that would leave the Opportunists out in the cold?

In talking recently with state officials and manufacturers in New England, I found them eager to supply me with facts on this kind of defense profiteering, but reluctant to be quoted specifically, lest they be reproached for having furthered the schemes of the Opportunists. The average manufacturer or politician can be only a victim of these practices, never a beneficiary, for none of the excess profits come his way. In order, therefore, not to embarrass honest men, I shall cite composite examples, in which names of places and persons are invented but none the less typical; much of the material that I shall quote, in letters and contracts, is exact though somewhat condensed.

Let us follow the course of that enterprising group The Arms and Ordnance Procurement Associates, which has set out to collect a percentage on national defense orders. On expensive stationery the president of the firm writes to the state government commission which acts as a clearing-house for manufacturers. The commission has production facilities listed in such a fashion that any manufacturer may learn where he can have this or that made or processed or finished. State listings are sent to production offices in Washington, to the army and navy, and to other states. The Procurement Associates request an interview with the commission. Soon granted an appointment, Mr. Lugg and Mr. Tinker of the Procurement Associates arrive at the commission offices; possibly they have brought along that prominent club man and broker, Mr. Dolan, who has an acquaintance with some member of the state commission. Mr. Lugg is a management engineer and Mr. Tinker is a sales-promotion expert. After some polite talk, they get down to business. Can the commission tell them who in this state can handle a particular defense requisite?

Suppose the Procurement Associates inquire about anti-aircraft guns. When the commission asks why they want this information they talk of their intimate connections with defense chiefs in Washington, then go on to explain that they are eager, like all good Americans, to help rearm the United States. They are out to cut red tape, get wheels moving. The commission is unable to refuse information that may bring business into the state; and the matter of any fee paid by the manufacturer to the Procurement Associates is utterly beyond its control. The commission finally informs the Procurement Associates that the A & B Machine Works have the equipment to make anti-aircraft guns. Then, in all probability, the Procurement Associates will go directly to the A & B Machine Works and introduce themselves as sent by the commission—a falsification which is not usually exposed by the indignant commission until the Procurement Associates' business is sufficiently advanced to be safe, or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has been flatly refused. If, the Opportunists explain, they should go to their connection in Washington, Mr. X (A Man Who Is Close to Knudsen), with a full description of a reputable New England plant capable of making, say, anti-aircraft guns, Mr. X (possibly the most honest of public servants) will be only too delighted to send government specifications directly to that plant and ask it for a bid on such guns. The only thing that is holding up Mr. X, they point out, is the regrettable lack of coordination of such information in Washington. The fact is, of course, that in all likelihood Mr. X would in time send, on his own initiative, those very plans to that very plant.

The Opportunists dangle a large bait before hungry men. If the men are hungry enough they bite and, virtually without proof that the allocation of such work to their respective plants is the doing of these salesmen and not the natural course of events in Washington, swallow a contract calling for a commission to be paid to the Opportunists upon receipt of a government order.

If by any chance this is a little more than the manager can easily take and he asks the Procurement Associates to get out, they may look sadly at him and tell him that they will feel it necessary, under the circumstances, to inform their connections in Washington not to send any inquiries for the time being to the A & B Machine Works, at least not until the manager has had time to think over their proposition and decide to come to some definite arrangement with them. They then leave.

Now let us look at another method. The Procurement Associates, who are interested by now in sub-contracts, first call on the state commission. Their experience at the offices of the commission is identical with the one already described, unless this is their second visit, in which case a certain coolness may mark the interview. After they have left the commission offices, they return to their own home office and start the good work by writing letters. A typical form letter will read like this:

> The A & B Machine Works,
> Mechanicsville.
>
> Through the cooperation of the State Industrial Commission, we are advised that you have some plant facilities adaptable to the urgent requirements of the Ordnance Department. At the present time a considerable volume of overflow orders for parts is being distributed to machine shops in the East through this organization by nationally known manufacturers.
>
> We are constantly receiving quotation inquiries and blueprints for many types of machine-shop work. The capacities of the shops which we represent are becoming greatly overtaxed and we seek additional outlets for such orders. If you have the facilities for such work and are interested, please write us.
>
> In writing, please list fully your equipment, floor space, number of your employees, and also whether or not all of your employees are American citizens, and the type of machine-shop work you prefer.
>
> Please let us hear from you by return mail if you are interested, as we are flooded with quotation inquiries.
> (Signed) The Arms & Ordnance Procurement Associates
> By: H. C. Lugg, President.

If the shop is at all interested (there is nothing in this letter about a commission) it is likely to reply, and thus to give the Procurement Associates another anonymous though detailed listing of equipment for their catalogue. This listing is impressive for the next prospect and it means that the job eventually offered to the A & B Machine Works will be temptingly well suited to its facilities.

The manager of the A & B Machine Works writes as requested, listing his equipment in full. Presently he gets another letter. Somewhat condensed, it runs:

> We acknowledge receipt of your communication of September—with accompanying enclosure.
>
> We are and will be in a position to forward blueprints and quotation inquiries in considerable quantities for work adaptable to your machinery. We have already placed much of this type of business and will be glad to add your plant to our clientele provided one copy of the Standard Form Agreement, herewith enclosed, is executed and returned to this office. . . . As all quotation inquiries forwarded to you will be strictly on a bid basis, our procurement commission will nowise affect your normal margin of profit but will merely be reflected in your bids and will only apply in those instances where work forwarded by us is considered acceptable enough to you to warrant your bid, and any re-orders from the same source.
>
> Please let us hear by return mail, etc.

The "Standard Form Agreement" is so remarkable a document that I give it in full below:

> We, the undersigned, do hereby employ and retain Arms & Ordnance Procurement Associates of New York to procure us quotation inquiries, specifications, blueprints, orders, or any of them, for production and fabrication of ordnance parts or equipment, and do hereby agree for value received and in consideration of services so rendered to pay the said Arms & Ordnance Procurement Associates a commission of ten percentum of the gross business so procured for us.
>
> In addition to the above specified commission on the initial orders, we further agree to pay to the aforesaid Arms & Ordnance Procurement Associates a commission of ten percentum on all ensuing orders from the same source or sources either directly or indirectly received by us hereafter. We further agree that the ten percentum commission herein provided for will also include and be computed upon all jigs, tools, dies, etc., as well as parts which might be billed separately or collectively by us.
>
> We further agree to pay the ten percentum commission promptly upon receipt of payment of our invoice

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for said orders and we agree to send a duplicate of all invoices applicable thereto at the time we bill the same to the office of the Arms and Ordnance Procurement Associates.

We further agree that this contract remain in force and effect during the continuation of the present European war, or any wars in continuation thereof by the present nations, or any wars immediately growing out of the present war, and in any event remain in full force and effect during the period and continuation of the rearmament program of the United States government.

We further agree that this agreement shall be binding upon our heirs, executors, assigns, and/or legal representatives.

It is a charming document—and remarkable not only for its language but for the fact that, standard or not, the grim little paragraph referring to wars and the children of wars, had to be modified later, as follows:

We further agree to pay the above specified commissions on all ensuing orders or re-orders hereafter received from the same source or sources and directly resulting from our satisfactorily handling the initial orders so procured or any orders received resulting from contacts established by Arms & Ordnance Procurement Associates.

We further agree that this contract remain in force and effect for two years from the date hereof.

It may be wondered how the Opportunists get hold of these blueprints they peddle about. It can be done by a simple and ingenious method.

A salesman for the Procurement Associates calls on the manager of the E & F Company, a big, nationally known plant. The salesman asks the manager what work is giving him the most trouble. The manager says that it is very difficult to get three-inch internal boring. The salesman then says that his firm has as a client the G & H Company, which has precisely the equipment necessary, and he asks the manager for blueprints and specifications to take to the G & H Company for a bid on this work. The manager is usually unwilling to give government prints to the salesman, but he is willing to send them to G & H, a reputable firm. The salesman agrees to this and telephones G & H that the E & F Company are sending prints on his recommendation. The prints are then posted out to the G & H Company. If G & H get the job, the Procurement Associates get a commission. But if the job is lost because the price is too high, the salesman for Procurement Associates calls on G & H to offer his regrets, at the same time saying that the E & F Company want him to bring back the blueprints and specifications. The G & H Company see no real reason for refusing to give him the prints, since they came through him, and so the salesman walks out with them. The Procurement Associates are now in a position to go to any plant in the country and exhibit these prints and specifications as an admirable warranty that they represent the E & F Company.

On March 30 Donald M. Nelson of the OPM issued a warning that the Opportunists were at work and asked business men to deal only with government-appointed purchasing agents. The warning was timely, but, considering the inroads the Opportunists have already made, it will probably take more than a warning to get rid of them.

In the Wind

THE Borough of Queens in New York City is fast becoming the headquarters and hunting ground of fascist groups. After the last election, in which he suffered a severe defeat, Joe McWilliams moved his American Destiny Party from Yorkville to Queens. Father Brophy, Coughlin's Eastern representative, now operates in Queens. And most of New York's professional fascists are said to be colonizing the borough in the hope that this vast area of lower middle-class dwelling places may become the stronghold of American fascism.

LOWELL MELLETT'S Office of Government Reports publishes each week, for the convenience of federal workers, a list of magazine articles on public affairs. In the index to the March 12 issue this entry appears: "Civil Liberties (see Subversive Activities)."

A PROMINENT FRENCHMAN who recently left France tells this story of the Parisians' attitude toward their conquerors. One of the large Paris restaurants is generally filled in the evenings by German and Italian officers as well as by French civilians. When the Germans enter there is complete silence. When the Italians appear, however, one of the Frenchmen stands up, asks for silence, then cries out: *"Voilà —voilà nos vainqueurs!"* Even the Germans, according to the story, join in the laughter.

A BEAUTY SHOP in Delaware, Ohio, bears the simple name of England. In its window is a picture of a woman getting a "permanent," and the slogan is "England Rules the Waves."

A UNITED PRESS STORY that appeared in only a few Southern papers told of a Negro who volunteered for army service but who was known and disliked by the examining board. Eager to get rid of him, the board asked the army doctor to do his utmost to find some physical defect. The doctor found nothing wrong and wrote this report: "Perfect physical specimen but ugly as hell. Army will accept at its own discretion."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be easily authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

The Georgia of the North

THE Farm Security Administration is not setting up any transient camps along the line between Connecticut and Westchester County, New York, to take care of the migrant suburbanites. They provide their own shelter but they are on the move and their migration is a demonstration of the fact that there may be as much pull in the hope that in Connecticut they will escape a state income tax as there is in the hope of getting a job anywhere picking beans or building a powder factory. Also some clerks as well as some capitalists are troubled because the real-estate tax on a suburban home in the Nutmeg State is only half what it is a little nearer the Grand Central Terminal in New York. Taxgatherers are disturbed in New York and pleased in Connecticut because taxpayers are moving.

The New York *Times* seemed to be philosophic—even poetic—about the ferment on the roads north of it. Contemplating the situation with a benignity which it extends to its entire suburban circulation on both sides of the line, the journal declared that "everybody in the present lively debate agrees that in both states the grass is green, the hills are soft and round, and the air is bracing." The description is of those green pastures we have all been seeking.

The new parkways may indeed be the perfect American plush-lined passageways for migrants to them. It seems almost impolite to suggest that the big roads may lead just as straight to sadness as does the road out of Oklahoma by Hooverville and the honky-tonk. They do. I have the testimony of a black shepherd in the green pastures to prove it.

I hope the escaping suburbanites will have better luck than some other people who also moved, in hope of escape, up the same roads. The Reverend Richard A. G. Foster told me about them, and as pastor of the Varick Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in New Haven he is one of them himself. Their story is perhaps not very important in the big picture of migration in America. It is not as dramatic as the mass movements of defense. It does not make as much news as the scurrying of the suburbanites from state income taxes and higher real-estate levies. But I think what the Reverend Mr. Foster, who preaches under the towers of a Yale gymnasium which looks like a cathedral, says about his people is interesting. He has, I think, a right to report on his own part of life in the pleasant state where financiers and factories, taxpayers and Gothic Towers are at home. His testimony, however, has not often enough been taken.

"I have traveled over Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, and in the backwoods of North Carolina and Virginia," he said, "and have seen the deplorable Negro homes there. But when I came to New Haven I was amazed to see terrible homes for Negroes here too. I inquired what Negroes pay for such 'homes' and felt that one of the cleverest pieces of robbery that has ever been perpetrated upon a people was the rent asked for these old fire-traps."

The shepherd in the land where "the grass is green and the hills are soft and round" went on: "Who cares how Negroes live! That seems to be the attitude of most people. As to a living wage for Negroes, apparently no one wants them to have enough money to better their conditions. Everyone knows that Negroes are paid less than any other racial group. But when the cost of living rises, they must pay just as much as anyone else. It is sad, but many regard Connecticut as the Georgia of the North as far as Negroes are concerned."

It is a long way from Georgia to Connecticut and not all the roads are planted with grass and trees. But the Negroes have been coming for a long time. The Reverend Mr. Foster's church was established in 1820. Eli Whitney was living in New Haven then. He had already been to Georgia and tightened the ties of slavery with his machine. Mr. Foster's church must have been one of the first havens for the escaped. They could shout hallelujah for freedom at the top of their lungs till the hallelujahs came back resounding from all Connecticut's little hills. That was when the road on which Negroes came to the North and to freedom ran underground. Now it has four lanes, and shrubs and spruce trees and grass are prettily planted beside it. A Negro can run on it as fast as a taxpayer. And if he has any wind left at the end of his journey he can sing hallelujah still in the A. M. E. Zion Church.

Within the sound of any such singing it seems to me that Connecticut itself might begin to contrast a tax policy designed to catch millionaires with its inability or unwillingness to provide decent living conditions for Negroes. Such a conflict in state attitudes of promise to some and performance to others may not be the American dream but too often has seemed the American plan.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

THE MODERN POETRY OF AMERICA HISPANA*

BY ALFONSO REYES

II

IN THE second hour of Modernism appear the Nicaraguan Rubén Darío (1867-1916) and the Mexican Amado Nervo (1870-1919). The great name of Darío means a whole era of Spanish poetry, equal at least to that of Garcilaso. Centuries must pass before human clay raises another such tower of poetic strength. In Darío's work, three principal phases are usually marked: the origins, sprung from Spain's soil, from the epigram of Campoamor and the romantic Becquer—through the volume *"Azul"; Rubenismo*, which some place apart from Modernism, it being his most imitated manner, an erudite music of violins and sonatinas and mythic bas-reliefs—through the volume *"Prosas Profanas";* and finally the huge discordant music of *"Cantos de Vida y Esperanza,"* thus far imitated by none, and one of the clearest summits of poetry. The first manner is "family jewelry"; the second is the gay luxury of the *salon;* the third is prophetic storm. Language, technique, imagination, are permanently made over. The inevitable reaction against Darío's reign will be a reaction against the sheer physical beauty of his verse, against the imperialism of his vast resources, against the plethora of motives for creation which he finds in the external world. The reaction will be fatigue, mutedness, almost silence: imprisonment in one's own soul. Darío, more than a lyre, was the whole orchestra. The reaction will take the form of intricate specialization within his immense panorama. Darío's prose would not have an indifferent page had not his secretaries in his last years put their hands on it. His book of critical silhouettes, *"Los Raros,"* has this distinction: it reveals not the literary influences that formed the master, but the influences that his successors were able to take hold of.

Nervo is an erudite poet in evolution toward a too consciously sought innocence. His growth reveals spiritual purification, often at aesthetic sacrifice. His tortured eroticism, redeeming and simplifying itself, lets its graces go. If in his youth "Sappho, Crisis, Aspasia, Magdalena, Afrodita" were the heroines of his "perverse desire," maturity made him rave mildly over no more than "the blonde and the dark one," *"la rubia y la morena."* Ten years with his "unmovable beloved" (then she died) did not placate him. Thereafter, sick and sad, he will dote on the kiss of a child and make believe that the sympathy shown for him is love. The ecclesiastic mysticism of his childhood, burdened with Catholic art, darkened by the black wings of á Kempis, becomes an abstract transparency in which are fused Franciscan sweetness, the sacrifice of Christ, and the aloofness of Buddha. He sports with both spiritualism and science, above all with the sciences of still unsolved mysteries. And at last his Saturnian complexities turn saintly, and his art grows vulgar; for "it is with good sentiments that one makes bad books." But his refined sensibilities win a fair use of the Mexican diminutive, so characteristic of our speech; his early techniques—those deliciously dissolving alexandrines, those coquettish and gluttonous ritournelles—disappear one by one; so that at the last this literary poet (if ever there was one!) exclaims: "Of literature, I know nothing."

Nervo came to his end "through the strait gate," utterly empty and perfect. His popularity with the American publics coincides with the aversion of the critics.

The Argentine, Leopoldo Lugones (1874-1938), places one foot on Modernism to begin a march that lasts his entire life. With *"Los crepúsculos del jardín"* he grasps the scepter and thenceforth never yields it. As he broadens, he leaves the schools behind him, unclassed by the athleticism of his robust personality. Every substance is palpable in his work, from languid silk to bronze; each new volume is a new zone of the spirit. He invents always, he never repeats; moving from the aristocratic to the popular and from the love of liberty to the bitter belief in the need for a dictator. Impatient as a man of the Renaissance, he embraces everything: humanism, politics, history, and exact sciences, botany, philology, anthropology, myths. His facility rides him. A provincial toward Buenos Aires, a creole toward Spain, torn between a ballad terseness and a rustic asperity, with something of Góngora and of a natural-born symbolist, now recondite, now diaphanous, with an indefatigable gift for words, he is the typical American embracing civilizations and anxieties. His *"Lunario Sentimental"* is a seed-store of the new Argentine poetry beyond him; in his gallant prose there are pages which I venture to call immortal. He devolved from anarchism to militarism; the youth of Argentina sorrowfully had to break with him. But as time passes, there will remain of him only the height of his destiny: his artistic per-

* The first part of this essay, which is the second of a series on A New World Literature, appeared in *The Nation* of last week. The third essay, by Eduardo Mallea, will appear soon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fection. It is not certain, nor need be here considered, in what sense there were associations between him and the Uruguayan Julio Herrera y Reissig (1873-1909). They refer at best to one phase of Lugones, and a parallel is not a map. The Bolivian Ricardo Jaimes Freyre (1872-1934) is also, up to a certain point, associated with Lugones; he was a poet of strong originality, investigator of new rhythms in whose work visions of the pampa grow palpable.

The Peruvian José Santos Chocano (1875-1934) is virtuosity incarnate. The chivalric pride of Díaz Mirón inspired him, but his eyes opened on the opulent history and nature of his land and led him to his own way. Its mountains and plains, its rivers and lakes, the legends of the Conquistadores, horses, eagles, are not so much descriptive features of his poems as blazons of a heraldry, weapons in an armory. The architecture is parnassian. And the landscape plays a divining part in a game of hieroglyphs. Seduced by visual enchantments, Chocano can graciously descend to describe the pirouette of a circus or the black-and-white of a tearoom. Only in the *"Limeña"* of his contemporary, Luis Fernán Císneres, has his funambular grace been excelled. But when Chocano came to Mexico, his wisdom in reading signs helped him to penetrate with a magistral stroke the sadness of the Indian.

The Colombian Guillermo Valencia (1873-), humanist and philosopher, directs his spiritual gaze over India, the Near East, the Bible, and classic lands; ascends through Spain to the European literatures; reaches Germany and Russia. He is an intense and grave poet with thought and form both purified. He has revived the long poem and evaded none of its problems. Narrator and contemplator more than lyricist, his culture is unobtrusive and inward. Contrast with his meditative features the shrewd grimace of another Colombian, the humorist Luis Carlos López, younger but already dead; his satires denote a reaction of Creolism against Modernism. Sentimental, urban, simple, the Argentine Evaristo Carriego (1883-1912) initiates in the extreme south another trek back to creolism.

Mexico's indisputable master today is Enrique Gonzáles Martínez (1871-). From the beginning, his command of his own tradition, his discipline tempered in the translation of the French poets, above all his probity of spirit enabled him to preserve in new forms and navigate to his own port the permanent assets of Romanticism together with the aesthetic freedom of the Modernists. Form for him is never the direct objective. Virile thought, introspection without tortuousness, healthy and ready imagination, severe lyricism, a minimum of ostentation, and a pattern limned by the necessity of his subject, are his pledges against time. In him, as in the Platonic figure, beauty and good fuse in a higher harmony.

In a word, the pleiade of poets I have briefly evoked made a conquest: liberty. It brought to America all the tendencies, all the techniques, and naturalized here the spirit of the world. After these poets, no accent and no capacity will be missing. Federico de Onís in his splendid anthology of Hispano-American poets names in the reaction to lyric simplicity the Argentine Rafael Alberto Arrieta (1889-); in the classical reaction the Argentine Enrique Banchs (1888-) and the Mexican Alfonso Reyes (1889-); in the romantic reaction the Argentine Arturo Capdevila (1889-) and the Uruguayan Carlos Sabat Ercasty (1887-). The Argentine Fernández Moreno (1886-) is the poet of the everyday event; he approaches the new Creole school of the Uruguayan Fernán Silva Valdés (1887-) and the Mexican Ramón López Velarde (1889-). The art of this poet, influenced by Lugones and Francis Jammes, both complex and subtly "small-town," is the object of deep study by the younger critics; one poem brought him fame: *"La Suave Patria."* The latest ships come laden with social unrest, a political poetry of redemption strangely mixed with new aesthetic forms and pure experiments in prosody. American poetry breaks once for all with the Graeco-Roman metaphor in the outstanding poet of youth, the Chilean Pablo Neruda.

We will close this review with a glance at the modern women poets of our America: the bitter and spirited Uruguayan Delmira Agustini (1890-1914); the Uruguayan Juana de Ibarbourou (1895-) whose work is strong of sap and fruitful; latest of the three Juanas of America Hispana, she evolves to an ever more dense religious expression which her great predecessor, Sor Juana de Inés of Mexico, would have understood. The Argentine Alfonsina Storni (1892-1939) is a cerebral, hyperaesthetic metropolitan devoured by her armored city. The Chilean Gabriela Mistral (1889-) is a genius in both verse and prose; mountainous and potent, her "inward mansions" are whipped by Andean tempests akin to the spiritual storms that shook the coarse strong flesh of Santa Teresa. Mistral is the author of the best poem inspired by the Mexican revolution: *"El Recado á Lolita Arriaga."*

. . . I yield to another the enviable privilege of discussing the younger poets, among whom are some of my strongest friendships and firmest admirations.

U. S. S. Jezebel

1

WITH an almost palpable, yet instantaneous, clang, the sun left the sea and dominated the disinterested heaven. There seemed to be no interval between that event and the assertion of itself upon the poopdeck of what at first appeared to be a solid marmoreal column and was then revealed as a line of clean, laundered, shining, liberty-bound gobs. Out of fifty individual souls emboned and bemuscled in disciplined flesh, the relentless routine of the fleet had created one of those ordered masses which men call crews, to itself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seeming a microcosmal society more intense and architectonic than the jaundiced union of the family, and to others as formidable in its moments of unanimity as the organized mass of atoms and the electric wave which combine to form an exploding cannon. The sun, now nearing the zenith, toward which it had deliberately insinuated its way through one of these interminable but zodiacal sentences, struck the crew of the Jezebel; and the crew, with a contemptuous immobility no less deadly than one of Seaman Snitkin's left jabs, struck right back. The sun was seen to falter: Even to sink a little. Viewing this phenomenon, Captain McCullers regarded his men with tacit congratulation. Shoreside, aquiver in the halted sunbeams, Goa awaited the visit of the eager liberty-party with a more than bridal alarm.

2

Focusing the crew's swelling urgency on himself, Captain McCullers shouted:

"Ahoy!"

At once the crew reached into its collective pants. Flashing, there was deployed before that chryselephantine slab a feral arsenal. The Captain's golden eyes inspected, in arrogant stillness, the improvised but nonetheless menacing matériel. A home-made submachine-gun . . . a rapier whittled down from a turbine-shaft . . . a Focke-Wulf Kurier bomber swinging from the hands of three huge Potato-peeler's Minders . . . poisoned belaying-pins . . . a beer-can of vitriol, poised delicately on the pinkie of the Midshipman, Little Billee . . . and two enormous and gleaming cojones belonging to the Mate, Franco. McCullers admitted into his gaze no hint of approval, but turned slowly away toward the Shuffleboard Turret, throwing over his shoulder the single command.

"Avast!"

With the inflexible devotion of years of self-sacrifice he leveled his shuffleboard upon the now almost permanently paralyzed sun. It was noon. The liberty-party was already swimming towards Goa. Here and there appeared an ominous but graceful swirl in the water; once there was a muffled curse. Minutes later, when the gobs climbed leisurelily out upon the adipose and bananoid shore, one straggler could be discerned loitering in the harbor and slowly tearing an unwary shark to pieces. As they entered the main street of the doomed town, he joined them swinging in one hand a sharp metallic fin. Then the first shriek rose from the inhabitants.

3

Aware of the mounting torrent of shouts, curses, shots, orgasms, and death-rattles which marked the progress of his crew, the Captain's spirit faltered. He turned to face that comrade which somehow embodied all the suffering and nobility of the Jezebel.

The ship's cat, Lupescu, unwinkingly regarded him from the top of a brass bunion on the forecastle. With a Medea-like intensity, she was endeavoring to hypnotize McCullers into remembering that it was time for luncheon. He felt a warm surge of something deeper than friendship possess his soul. It was, he realized, hunger. He ejaculated:

"Chow!"

Liverwards, Lupescu delicately followed him to the galley.

4

His inanition satiated, the Captain glanced ashore. The town was burning nicely, and the screams of the populace were dying away. The crew, he noted, was swimming back to the Jezebel. Here and there a terrified octopus rose high in the air, grotesquely like a turnip-ghost in ballet-skirts as it strove to escape the grip of a passing Steward. The Captain turned to Lupescu, once more inviolate upon her bunion, and for a timeless moment looked unspoken intimacy into her eyes.

They were bent, he observed, upon the liberty-party: And had in them a: Hint of sur: Prise! Turning, he contemplated those precious segments of his personality. A half-defined figure seemed to play about their ranks, melting and reforming as if in the effort to achieve its avatar. It was like the ghost of a dead seaman, or the wraith of one unborn. Yellowly, it met McCullers's gaze, and shrank into a near invisibility again. The Captain indignantly howled:

"Who the hell are you?"

The figure drew itself together into a profound and determined effort. Slowly, like a photographic plate which defines its image as much by its own force as by the corrosion of its collaborious acid, the man took shape—the hat slouched scornfully over one eye, the tight-lipped grin, the bloodshot pupils beneath no eyebrows, and the degenerate nobility implicit in every muscle. In one hand he bore a corncob thing, doubtless a pipe. He said:

"Mr. Faulkner sent me. He said you'd make a sailor out of me. My name's Popeye!"

And, as in proof, he displayed the heraldic symbol borne in his other hand, the mystic emblem which paralleled and complemented his corncob. It was a bunch of rich, flourishing, baroque spinach. GILBERT HIGHET

Science and Society

THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF SCIENCE. By J. G. Crowther. The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

PERHAPS no major activity in the United States gets less public attention than science. Reams may be written in the press on some political speech of doubtful value. Yet a few lines suffice to announce a new infra-red detector for airplanes. The inventor's name is lost in anonymity, in contrast to the double-case type used for a flyer's personal opinion. Editorial ignorance of what is news therefore makes it impossible to judge the influence of science on the national well-being.

In the book under review the author, who has followed science for many years in many countries, places this form of endeavor in relation to the social and economic setting in which it exists. He does not fall into the fallacy of thinking that science is a phenomenon of the past two hundred years, but covers its various manifestations from the origin of man. In the first parts of the book he has been obliged to lean heavily on the anthropologist's conjectures and evidence of primitive man's behavior. But the conciseness of the writing presupposes a whittling away of the irrelevant. The bold picture left is more than satisfying.

Nowhere else have I had the pleasure of reading so complete a description of the Moslem contributions to modern

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

science. The other periods of science are also dealt with competently. All this, however, would not necessarily make a remarkable book, which this one is. The decisive factor lies in the author's ability to show the interrelation of the science of a period with its economic background.

"Ambitious and able slaves were preoccupied with the acquisition of freedom and the conveyance of manual tasks to inferior slaves. The preoccupation with status was inimical to the objective study of manual processes and the phenomena of nature. This influence was one of the causes of the decline of science in Roman society." These words might well be written of certain branches of science today. The mind of the worker in the biological sciences is much more preoccupied with status than is that of the worker in the physical sciences, and this is one of the reasons why these branches are not moving at comparable rates. Concern over status also has another intrinsic drawback. Once status is attained, it has to be defended and in many cases leads away from science to the personal. Another feature of acquired status which is today creating difficulties similar to those in Roman society is that the contact with the experimental material itself is frequently left to inferior slaves (read *technicians*). Some of our best minds are now trying to solve this problem.

The tournaments of mathematics held under the King of Sicily in 1225 led to many advances in mathematical theory. Today such occasions are called meetings of the Mathematical Society, but it is not difficult to detect the tournament spirit.

One of the most startling descriptions in the book, and a real contribution, is the explanation of the loss of definite positive achievements through the centuries. It seems inconceivable to us that such things as the radio or immunization to disease could be lost; yet other things of just as much significance have been lost. Owing to the fact that the Greeks were separated from their slaves, they did not get a complete conception of the use of the lever. The slaves, on their side, without any theoretical knowledge, applied the forces to the lever where they did the most good; but the lack of contact between slave and master, practice and theory, effectively prevented these applications from being recorded in the writings of the Greeks. The destruction of the Greek labor system, coupled with the respect of the conquerors for the Greek writings, led to inefficient use of the lever; and the escapement principle, on which so much modern engineering depends, had to be rediscovered hundreds of years later. As each civilization has gone down, many of its achievements have disappeared with it, perhaps for centuries, perhaps forever.

Perhaps no more timely topic can be found than the section dealing with the rise of the Moslem empire. It was predicated on the invention of the saddle and the stirrup. With these two mechanical advances, the Moslem soldier was able to move faster than his enemy and fight from above him. Mobility then played as important a part as it does today. Mahomet and his followers seized upon the new invention before its use became widespread.

It is impossible to mention even a small fraction of the scientific achievements that Mr. Crowther has put in a new light. It is enough to say that he has written a remarkable description of the interaction of science and society through the ages.

HUGH H. DARBY

The South

THE MIND OF THE SOUTH. By W. J. Cash. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.75.

"THE Congo is not more different from Massachusetts or Kansas or California," than Alabama, said Mr. Carl Carmer, himself a native of New York State and a Southerner by adoption. That is a hyperbole, according to Mr. Cash who is a native of South Carolina and long a citizen of the most "progressive" of Southern states, North Carolina. It should not be forgotten, moreover, that Alabama is almost as different from North Carolina or Virginia.

"Nevertheless," writes Mr. Cash in what he calls a Preview to Understanding, "if it can be said that there are many Souths, the fact remains that there is also one South." Furthermore, although fundamentally it derives from the common American heritage—"To imagine it existing outside this continent would be quite impossible"—"the peculiar history of the South has so greatly modified it from the general American norm that, when viewed as a whole, it decisively justifies the notion that the country is—not quite a nation within a nation, but the next thing to it."

To understand the mind of the South as such Mr. Cash feels it is necessary to understand this peculiar history, and a large proportion of his book is taken up with a sort of meditative sociological retrospect. From this it is fairly apparent that the "one South" (as Mr. Cash implies but does not clearly state, although he calls one of his chapters Of the Frontier the Yankee Made) is the creation of the North. Neither before nor during the War of Secession was the South truly united, and this was a not negligible factor in the defeat of the Confederacy. It took the sufferings of Reconstruction and after to unite the South to such an extent that it is still "solid," still refers to that war as "the" war, has only lately begun to criticize itself, and still cannot stand criticism by an outsider. The report of President Roosevelt's special committee a year or two ago, though in some ways it might be interpreted as a far greater criticism of the economically dominant sections of the country, was widely resented even by Southern intellectuals.

That is because, as Mr. Cash shows, there is one South also in the sense that both the Old South and the New South are legends, springing from the same necessity, that of affirming the difference and self-sufficiency of the South; so that the paradox of believing at the same time that the South is entirely different from the rest of the country and yet just as up-to-date, progressive, and "American" gives very few Southerners pause. The first Southern intellectuals to see through the legend of the New South, the Agrarians, fell back upon the legend of the Old in a modified form. In doing this, however, they were not taking a unique line, but following the same pattern as some of our Neo-Thomists or some of the English intellectuals who have recoiled from the ruins left by the collapse of capitalist expansion to take refuge among the early Tudors or the late Whigs. Some of the intellectuals, Mr. Cash points out, showed, on the other hand, "a marked tendency to react to a new extreme, and as they sloughed off the old imperative to use their writings as a vehicle for glorifying and defending Dixie, to take more or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

less actively to hating and denouncing the South." As examples he cites Thomas Wolfe, Erskine Caldwell, and, a little more dubiously, William Faulkner. But here again the Southern writers are exemplifying a national, perhaps an international tendency of the period between two wars, as Van Wyck Brooks has explained in a recent article in the *Saturday Review of Literature,* drawn from his new book "On American Literature." "I think our generation," says Mr. Brooks, "will be remembered as the one in which everyone hated, often without visible reason, the town in which he was born." Indeed, some of the most conspicuous characteristics of the Southern mind, such as its individualism and its rhetorical cast, might be viewed as intensifications of tendencies predominant in the American mind as a whole, and common in some degree to all peoples nurtured in a parliamentary and democratic tradition. (For the South is democratic as well as Democratic.)

In short, though to Northerners this is a truism and to many Southerners treason, what makes the mind of the South different is that it thinks it is. Even the influence of the Negro problem is one of degree and not of kind. From this Mr. Cash excepts Virginia, which, on account of its unique history, its priority on the scene, and other factors, he believes really achieved what the rest of the South only aspired to. To everyone except dialectical materialists, however, this constitutes as valid a difference as any, in fact a difference of utmost reality and importance. To explain why the South thinks it is different is the object of Mr. Cash's study. Of the actual mind of the South he says comparatively little. This is a sociological rather than a psychological or intellectual examination, and it is largely historical. There is very little in it which has not been recounted many times before; but the emphasis and purpose are new. It will doubtless be an aid to an understanding on the part of Americans of other regions who have been alternately charmed and maddened, and always puzzled, by the apparent paradoxes and inconsistencies of the Southern viewpoint. It might have been more interesting for those who know the South if it had been written from a greater distance. Mr. Cash sometimes seems to be confused by the trees. As a Southerner himself he deprecates plain-speaking and takes his time to convey a conclusion. In the matter of style he often carries individualism to the point of quaintness, and rhetoric to the point of Carlylese. But these are minor blemishes of a thoughtful and knowledgeable book.

JAMES ORRICK

The Lins in China

DAWN OVER CHUNGKING. By Adet, Anor, and Meimei Lin. The John Day Company. $2.

THE daughters Lin belong to the young China of dreams and desires, and of faith that these can be realized through struggle: a China ready to fight for old values and for new ones it hopes to create. Sensitive and conscientious in their patriotism, they naturally wanted to return and assume part of the burden in the epic battle for independence. While China "suffered and fought," writes Adet Lin, "we were leisurely enjoying ourselves and traveling around foreign lands." But last year Pater Lin Yutang visited Chungking to see how the war was and he took his family with him. His daughters got the longed-for opportunity to see and hear and smell the phenomenon and at times to feel its touch.

Out of their experience the younger Lins have now produced this exciting account of life and death in and around the Chinese capital. Passages written by Anor and Meimei, ages fourteen and ten, deal with the hectic adventures of their daily lives and give you an idea of the young mind's reaction to being bombed. They report with charm and an inherited talent for observing the significant. Their elfish wit will bring many a chuckle to adult readers. Consider Anor's air-raid stories:

> There was one baker who did not get to the dugout and suddenly a bomb dropped beside him. Before it had time to explode, he pressed the dough he was mixing on it, and suffocated it so that it did not explode.
>
> There was a family consisting of a father, a wife, a concubine and a precious son of four months. Suddenly bombs began to fall. The concubine, being bright and quick, laid the child, the most precious one, on the floor; the husband, being second important, was told to lie on top of it, the concubine, thinking herself more important than the wife, piled on the husband, and the wife was told to cover the concubine with her own body. The result was that the wife got a little hurt; a piece of her flesh was blown off, as she was on top, but the concubine, the husband, and the baby were all safe, and the baby was not suffocated or crushed!

But it is Adet, the eldest daughter and now seventeen, who writes the largest and most informative part of the book. In some of her pages you forget, almost, that you are reading a children's report. Here and there are remarks that penetrate into the universal problems of our day. Frequently descrip-

BOOKS THAT ARE ALWAYS TIMELY

At Insignificant Prices—Illustrated Gift Editions

50c for one title, 40c for each additional

1. Alice in Wonderland
2. Anderson's Fairy Tales
3. Aesop's Fables
4. Faust, Goethe
5. Anna Karenina, Tolstoi
6. Nana, Zola
7. Plays, Chekhov
8. Samuel Pepys' Diary
9. Green Mansions, Hudson
10. Amphitryon 38
11. Golden Treasury of English Verse, Palgrave
12. Rubaiyat, Fitzgerald
13. Sonnets from the Portuguese, E. B. Browning
14. Way of All Flesh, Butler
15. The Case of Leon Trotsky, Dewey Commission
16. Not Guilty, Dewey Commission
17. Fabulous Invalid, Hart & Kaufman
18. Hundred Days, Guedalla
19. Farmington, Clarence Darrow
20. The Renaissance, F. F. Brentano
21. Kinds of Love, Max Eastman

The Following Books, 90c for one title, 80c each additional

22. America: Its History and People, H. V. Faulkner & T. Kepner. 850 pages, 150 illustrations, 76 maps.
23. American Historical Scenes, K. Roberts & J. T. Adams, etc.
24. Portrait of an Era, as seen by Charles Dana Gibson
25. All About Parties: Modern Party Book, N. Kaye
26. The Giant Quiz Book, Slifer and Crittenden
27. The Second Giant Quiz Book, Slifer & Crittenden
28. Modern Mexican Artists, C. Merida
29. Founders of Modern Medicine, Elie Metchnikoff
30. Blue Book of Cookery, F. C. Smith
31. Mark Twain, Edgar Lee Masters
32. Intimate Papers of Col. House
33. An Unfinished Life, Ruth St. Denis
34. We Saw It Happen: The News Behind the News, 13 New York Times Correspondents
35. Defense of Britain, Liddell Hart
36. Through the Fog of War, L. Hart
37. Democracy Works, A. G. Hays
38. Holy Bible, both Testaments, King James Version, maps, illustrations

39.	Complete Works of J. W. Riley. 10-vol. ed. published to sell at $20.	$5.00
40.	Works of Robert Louis Stevenson. 10 volumes	4.00
41.	Thesaurus of Humor	1.65
42.	The Works of Tolstoi (complete) 16 volumes	7.50
43.	I Confess, Benjamin Gitlow	1.50
44.	Milton's Paradise Lost and Complete Poems, with Doré illus., 688 pages	2.25
45.	Government by Judiciary, 2 volumes, Louis B. Boudin	2.25
46.	Novels of Jane Austin. All six in one	1.50
47.	Anatole France. Six greatest novels	1.50
48.	Life of Michelangelo Buonnarroti. J. A. Symonds	1.50
49.	Best Plays of Modern American Theatre, includes Idiot's Delight, Boy Meets Girl, Winterset, etc. 896 pages, large type, buckram bindings	3.00
50.	Book of Furniture and Decorations, Aronson	2.50

WE PAY POSTAGE. MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO

DELL'S BOOK VALUES, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Please send me the following books:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38
39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

Name.....

Address.....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions are vivid and somehow very accurate. For example, this reaction to a ruined street in Peipei, just after a bombing:

> In that upper space where birds could fly through now there had been a second floor and people slept on it. But now how could people sleep in that space? It seemed our sight suddenly had quickened; usually one would see after a period of a hundred years little pieces of wall crumble down and the beams rot gradually, so that the change was hardly noticeable. And now it was like a man who had been imprisoned for thirty years and come out to step into a different world and to see his sons already growing beards.

For that is bombing: it is an outrage against gradualness; like all catastrophe, it is a violation of evolution. It shortens adolescence, turns youth to middle age in a single night, and disorganizes or obliterates time.

Adet ends up on a note of political faith which reflects the heroic creed she believes now firmly unites all China:

> Ever since the revolution, nearly thirty years ago now, there was a dream of China as an independent country. . . . And yet in these thirty years the dream was never accomplished. . . . Many had died for it while the people kept on being trampled under the heels of the landlords and the nation kept on being humiliated. And now the moment had come at last. A China united and fighting against the enemy, and meanwhile a new nation of order was building itself up . . . a nation like a scientist caught by an idea. When a nation of people is caught by a dream, you can imagine how formidable it is!

And the dream, she concludes, must come true. Bombs may kill and destroy men and the things they build, but they cannot kill the idea and the purpose to which both the men and the things are dedicated.

EDGAR SNOW

Land of the Free

LANDSCAPE OF FREEDOM. By Mauritz A. Hallgren. Howell, Soskin and Company. $3.50.

IT TAKES Mr. Hallgren more than four hundred large pages to tell the story of personal liberty in the United States, from the beginnings of Colonial history to our own day and hour. In the course of it he also manages to cover the public attitude at various periods in our history toward politics, religion, and sex; manners and morals, with many interesting facts on eating and drinking; the state of culture, including music, letters, and the arts; and our slow but sure progress toward the daily bath. And he does it with gusto.

For it is clear that, even allowing Mr. Hallgren a little pardonable exaggeration now and then when he gets really warmed up to his subject, we Americans are the most violent, volatile, wild-cattinest, obstreperous folks that ever swung all the way out on one side of a pendulum just for the fun of swinging all the way back on the other. We may laugh at the spectacle of Americans in search of freedom or we may weep. Mr. Hallgren, like a good historian, does very little of either. He merely tells his story.

Let us remember, for example, that those who fled the Old World in search of freedom of worship established on these shores as rigid a system of doctrine as the world had yet seen and as firm a control of manners and behavior. Let us remember that no sooner was liberty fought for and won than the Alien and Sedition laws were passed to check it. Salem witchcraft flourished and was done penance for at the end of the seventeenth century; but in the eighteen-forties, two little girls of Hydesville, New York, learned that they could produce spirit tappings by pressing their toes to the end of their bed, and as a result a wave of spiritualism swept the country.

In our comparatively short but stormy history labor has won the right to strike, picket, and negotiate; the grip of the church on the minds and morals of the people has been loosened; humane letters has recovered a little from the foaming fanaticism of comstockery; women have the suffrage, may own property, and in most places can walk out on the street in pants without being arrested. But let us not congratulate ourselves on our libertarian triumphs. Mr. Hallgren tells the shocking story of anti-German persecution in 1917, when, before books were burned in the Third Reich, German books, magazines, and pamphlets were burned in various communities in the United States. He reviews the red raids that followed the war, when the Postmaster General and the Attorney General of the United States forgot that they were holding office in a democracy. And latest and most shameful of all, he reminds us of the excesses of national prohibition, when a law was defied by millions of otherwise law-abiding citizens, and completely unlawful attempts were made by the authorities to enforce it.

An American may very well finish Mr. Hallgren's book in a chastened mood. Perhaps after more than three hundred years of living in the land of the free, all we have done in the direction of achieving the good life is to abolish the spittoon.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Recollections of Freud

FROM THIRTY YEARS WITH FREUD. By Theodor Reik. Translated by R. Winston. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

THIS is a collection of papers which have previously been published elsewhere, in full or in part. The layman might find them not too enlightening, while the professional psychoanalyst is supposed to be acquainted with the data offered. One might regret that Reik did not follow through his intention of giving us an intimate portrait of Freud's scientific personality. Evidently the time is not ripe for a true appraisal of Freud as a person and a leader; his death is of too recent date and the times are so turbulent that his pupils, who knew him best, are scattered all over the world as expatriates, refugees whose historical perspective is naturally marred by the vicissitudes of their new situation and environment. Under such circumstances it is quite natural that too much of the personal element has entered into what should have been an objective appraisal of a scientific discipline and of its founder.

The translator of the book did Reik a disservice. Reik is not as obscure as some awkward turns of phrase would suggest. One cannot call Dostoievski a "poet" nor very well denote obscure phenomena as "dark"; nor do such expressions as "psychic perception" mean what Reik intends to say.

As a document the book has interest, since it does reflect the psychological difficulties which the uprooted European scientists of today have to meet.

GREGORY ZILBOORG, M. D.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN BRIEF

JOB'S HOUSE. By Caroline Slade. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

As in her previous novel, "The Triumph of Willie Pond," Mrs. Slade presents some graphic, almost gruesome annals of the poor, and of their treatment at the hands of the public relief agencies, "The Welfares." Old Jobie Mann, unemployed but sturdy and independent at sixty-eight, puts up with as much of their prying as he and his wife can stand; then he decides to renounce an old-age pension and retain his self-respect. "Job's House," however, unlike the tragic story of the Pond family, never shakes off the artificial stiffness of a demonstration case, constructed to illustrate the functioning of some state agencies and the reasons why "clients" are not always in a receptive mood.

MATCHING YOUTH AND JOBS. By Howard M. Bell. American Council on Education. $2.

Mr. Bell either does not realize, or he glosses over, the deeper implications of his problem, with the result that the reader is lost in a mere chaos of "facts" and "cases." As an auxiliary manual for people who are actively dealing with unemployment this book might have its uses. But the average person, wishing to gain a clearer understanding of the situation, will find it bewildering.

AMERICA'S LOST PLAYS. "The Last Duel in Spain and Other Plays." By John Howard Payne. Edited by Codman Hislop and W. R. Richardson. "The Great Diamond Robbery and Other Recent Melodramas." Edited by Garrett H. Leverton. "Five Plays" by Charles Hoyt. Edited by Douglas L. Hunt. Princeton University Press. $5 each.

Three more in the projected twenty-volume series of hitherto unpublished American plays. Admittedly, most of the works included have little literary merit but many have at least curious interest of one sort or another. The volume of melodramas includes two—"From Rags to Riches" (1903) and "No Mother to Guide Her" (1905)—whose titles have become bywords. From the Hoyt volume it is astonishing to learn that plays as famous as these have never previously been printed. "A Trip to China Town" (1891) was performed 657 consecutive times and held a record until the production of "Lightnin'." From it came two songs which many still remember—"Reuben, Reuben, I've Been Thinking" and "The Bowery." "After the Ball," though written by Charles K. Harris, also appeared in this farce.

WHAT'S PAST IS PROLOGUE. Reflections on My Industrial Experience. By Mary Barnett Gilson. Harper and Brothers. $3.

Miss Gilson is a pioneer in scientific industrial employment management. She early realized where her work lay, and the story of her life falls into two parts, which make one—the preparation for her career in industry and the career itself up to the present stock-taking. The real purpose of this book is to make a contribution to social history and, as such, its primary appeal is to sociologists. Nevertheless, it has also general interest as the autobiography of a wise and sympathetic woman.

DRAMA

Minority Report

"NATIVE SON," the successful novel by Richard Wright, has been made into a play by Paul Green and produced—very fancily—by Orson Welles at the St. James Theater. The reception by the press was not only favorable but in most instances wildly enthusiastic and it is therefore only fitting for me to warn my readers that mine is a minority report. My colleagues made free use of such words as "smashing," "brutal," and "violent." I recognize the suitability of the adjectives but their persistent occurrence is really the only thing which enables me to believe that the performance I saw is the one which most of the other reporters were talking about. And I will accept them only if "noisy" and "frantic" be added to the list, with "dull" figuring somewhere as an indication of the final effect.

When I read "Native Son," the novel, some months ago I found it undeniably impressive despite the bald, graceless, and plodding style. Its resemblance in theme, structure, and general manner to Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" is almost too striking, but like Dreiser the author manages to make his lumbering matter-of-factness carry conviction. Unfortunately, however, such books do not lend themselves easily to dramatization and if the text of the present play were to be examined I am sure that it would be found to be very little more than a skeleton outline from which much had been omitted and to which nothing capable of increasing the effectiveness of the presentation had been added. Certainly one result is to separate rather than further to integrate the two elements of the novel—crude melodrama and social preachment—so that most of the second element is held in reserve for the last two scenes which come after the action is concluded and provide a positively stupifying anticlimax in two parts. As for the courtroom scene, it is not long enough to become impressive through the weight of detail and not pointed enough to gain in dramatic effectiveness what it loses in bulk. All in all I do not see how it can possibly be denied that the text of the play, considered merely as a text, is a pretty poor substitute for that of the novel.

Obviously this is where the producer is supposed to step in and provide, by means of "the new stagecraft," purely theatrical effects calculated to make up for the sketchiness of the play itself. And Mr. Welles evidently decided to shoot the works, for everything is determinedly "different" whether the strangeness has anything except strangeness to recommend it or not. For one thing, a sort of inverted proscenium consisting of a brick wall reduces the width of the stage and elevates the acting platform several feet above the usual stage level so that much of the action takes place in a confined space, and can only be watched if one tilts the head at a very uncomfortable angle. For another, a large proportion of the scenes take place in a semi-obscurity which calls to mind the masterly device inadvertently achieved by the movie director in "Once in a Lifetime." And for still another, the members of the audience are given, upon entering, a slip of paper which informs them that they cannot have a program until after the performance is over—the idea apparently being that to study the cast of characters might break the subtle spell of a production which is certainly the noisiest since "Hellzapoppin." And when the novel devices do have a recognizable purpose, that purpose seems always some sort of mere harassment of the nerves as, for example, in the big scene where the hero shooting it out with the officers of the law blazes away point-blank at the audience while police whistles shrill away at the back of the auditorium.

In so far as such scenes may be described as effective I do not think the effects are worth achieving. An audience may be reached legitimately through its intellect or through its emo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions. It may also be stirred through a simple assault upon the nerves and I am beginning to wonder whether the so-called new stagecraft ever succeeds in promoting anything except the simple jitters. Of course any normal person will emerge with frayed nerves from an evening during which he has been yelled at by assorted performers, shot at from the stage, and kept on edge during what might have been the merciful peace of the brief pauses between scenes, by hideous noises which rumble and roar from under the stage. But—and I use the phrase in all seriousness—is it art? Might not one achieve the same effect by spending an evening in what used to be called, with grim irony, "The Fun House" at Coney Island?

A few weeks ago the *New Yorker* published a picture of an elaborate torture chamber in which a victim tied to a chair was being subjected to an inferno of radios, electric signs, insurance agents, and automobile salesmen all working on him at once. "We are," said the calm scientist in charge, "merely trying to determine the limit of human endurance." I do not forget that I have admired some of Mr. Welles's productions in the past, but I am beginning to wonder if his ultimate goal isn't the same as that of the *New Yorker's* grim experimenter.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

THE title "From Austin High Comes Jazz" for Columbia's album (C-40, $2.50) of performances by Bud Freeman and His Famous Chicagoans represents a claim for the performances in the unauthoritative accompanying story by John Hammond. The story is that the group of young musicians identified with Austin High School in Chicago—whom Hammond gives as Freeman, Dave Tough, Eddie Condon, Frank Teschemaker, and Benny Goodman—developed a "Chicago style" of ensemble performance which they used "in a way which has never since been duplicated"; and that these new records allow us to hear again "that unparalleled spirit which was lost when these musicians succumbed to economic temptation and necessity and joined big bands"—and this although Freeman, Condon, and Tough play on these records with musicians who were not members of the Austin group: presumably the Austiners have imparted their style and spirit to the others, as Hammond tells us they did to Jack Teagarden in the late 'twenties. But the fact is that even in Chicago the style and spirit were not the exclusive possessions of the Austiners—that other musicians played that way and as well; and one might add that Condon and Goodman were in fact not members of the Austin group but were among the other musicians, along with Muggsy Spanier, Gene Krupa, Jess Stacy, Joe Sullivan, who occasionally played with the Austiners; but since Hammond puts Goodman among the original Austin group one might ask why Goodman is not on these new records: Beiderbecke and Teschemaker, explains Hammond, are dead; but Goodman is alive. Moreover, the style was carried to other cities and absorbed by other musicians (Teagarden was only one). And aside from whether it could be said to have been lost as long as any of these musicians continued to play that way, as they did privately and in recording studios even when they played in big bands publicly (and not all of them took such jobs), the fact is that the new Freeman records were preceded a year ago by the even more brilliant Muggsy Spanier performances on Bluebird—to say nothing of other records in the past ten years. They are, then, to be taken merely as additional examples of the style, some of them—"At the Jazz Band Ball" (35853), "Jack Hits the Road" and "That Da-Da Strain" (35854), "Forty-Seventh and State" (35855), "Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble" (35856)—with exciting ensembles and fine solos.

As it happens, Columbia itself has reissued a 1935 Chicago style performance of "The Land of Dreams" by Paul Mares and his Friars Society Orchestra (35880)—not one of the best ever, but with the characteristic driving ensembles and good solos by Stacy at the piano, Pecora on trombone, and Mares on cornet. It is clouded somewhat by poor recording, as is "Nagasaki" on the reverse side. Other Columbia reissues of hot jazz classics include one that *is* a classic—the superb Louis Armstrong "Mahogany Hall Stomp" (35879), with the less good "Beau Koo Jack" on the reverse side, and an album (C-41, $2.50) of Earl Hines's piano-playing. "Basic Negro simplicity" is one of the Hammond stock of ideas-regardless-of-fact—in this instance the fact of occasional Negro complexity and ornateness, and in particular Hines's exhausting intricacy in the six 1928 solo improvisations in this album. I find that I can take it only in the slow ones, "I Ain't Got Nobody" (35875) and "Caution Blues" (35876). On the fourth record (35878) are two band performances—"Rosetta," with a good Hines chorus, and "Deep Forest," which I find uninteresting.

As it happens also, Commodore has issued two records made by Eddie Condon and a group that includes several other Chicagoans, with excellent performances of "Pretty Doll" and "Oh, Sister Ain't That Hot" (535), and "Georgia Grind" and "Dancing Fool" (536). And Commodore 534 offers piano solos by Joe Bushkin—"In a Little Spanish Town" and Bushkin's own "Blue Chips," both beautifully sensitive but harmonically too lush for my taste. I prefer to hear Bushkin, as I do Hines, play in bands, where the tendency to luxuriance is restrained somewhat.

As for other new records, I am not one of those who can hear the fairies that were in the studio when Benny Goodman recorded; all I can hear is what is on the records, whether this is stiff, cold playing of Mozart, or jazz as poor as Goodman has recorded for many years, or on the other hand the almost unique "My Honey's Lovin' Arms" that Victor has reissued on Bluebird 11056, and now, after the most recent rubbish, "As Long As I Live" (Columbia 35901), which pretends to nothing more than the usual series of variations on a tune, and which Goodman, Cootie Williams, Basie, and others of the Sextet play simply, subtly, and exquisitely. (My copy has a bad rattle due to faulty recording or processing.) Another example of this style, but not quite as good, is the Sextet's "On the Alamo" (Columbia 35938). And Ellington, also using a small group, provides a fine example in the Rext Stewart "Linger Awhile" (Bluebird 11057). Other things I have enjoyed are Ellington's early "Jubilee Stomp" and the parts of his recent "Country Gal" without Cootie Williams's growling (Columbia 35776); "Dicky Wells Blues" and "Bill Coleman Blues" (Victor 27318); Mildred Bailey's "There'll Be Some Changes Made," with Mary Lou Williams at the piano, and "Rockin' Chair," both issued originally on Vocalion (Columbia 35943); the new Teddy Wilson Orchestra's "I Never Knew" (Columbia 35905); the Hot Lips Page Trio's "Do It If You Wanna" (Bluebird 8634); the Crosby Bobcats' playing in parts of "Take Me Back Again" and "I'll Come Back to You" (Decca 3576); and Ethel Waters's singing of "Georgia on My Mind" (Bluebird 11028).

B. H. HAGGIN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editors

Survey of Two Worlds

Dear Sirs: If I had the choice between the world of Adolf Hitler and the world of Freda Kirchwey, I should certainly not choose hers.

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

New York, March 27

Father Gillis Protests

Dear Sirs: In your issue of March 22, Mr. Herbert Agar calls me an "appeaser." Since that word has come to have a nasty connotation of cowardice, I feel that Mr. Agar should have favored his readers with at least a definition, if not a justification, of the term as applied to me.

Further, he accuses me, amongst others, of being "partly motivated by the ancient undying grievances of the Irish." But "who knoweth the mind of a man save the spirit of man that is in him?" I have examined my conscience in regard to my motive for opposing the entrance of America, my own country, into the war. I have found in myself no race prejudice or animosity. Has Mr. Agar been able to dig deeper into my soul than I myself?

Why should he not stick to facts and leave the matter of hidden motives to the Omniscient? And in his school of journalism is it considered honorable to fling an epithet in place of a fact or a proof?

JAMES M. GILLIS

New York, March 25

Against Luce Thinking

Dear Sirs: Miss Kirchwey has already dealt with Mr. Luce's roomy essay on Americanism (which reminded me irresistibly of W. J. Cameron's Ford talks on the same subject) but there is more she might have said. To me the most irritating thing about the *Life* spread was the assumption in every line that this was America speaking through the mouth of its prophet—"I am Sir Oracle, and, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark."

Unlike Mr. Luce, I cannot speak for America, but by way of cordial example to the rest of the hundred-and-thirty million, here are my own war aims:

We all know what we are against. We do not all know, or rather are not all agreed, what we are for. I want Hitler beaten, yes. But I would not turn my hand over to beat him simply to preserve Chamberlainism in England or Luce-Cameronism in this country. "The American Ideal," "The American Century," "The American Way of Living"—I do not forget that for these and similar slogans we were asked to vote for Coolidge, Hoover, Landon, and Willkie by the same people who are now pushing them at us in order to whip up a war spirit. Well, I don't need my spirit whipped up; I'll fight, all right. But I am going to war against Hitler because he threatens to interrupt my war against Luce and Cameron—just when I was doing so well, too.

The glory of our kind of government is that it permits us to wage a continual fight against its abuses. I am not sure whether the thing we are fighting for is an "American" way of living or not, or whether the thing we are fighting for is an "American" century. But there is a tradition, an idiom which is native to this country and to me, and which I will fight to save. It was not created by these sloganmongers; they could never have made it, they do not share or express it, and they cannot replace it should it be lost. But neither have they been able to destroy it, and the Nazis might, so I am gunning for Hitler now, and I'll see Messrs. Luce and Cameron later.

DIGBY B. WHITMAN

Winthrop, Mass., March 26

U. S. Plan for Negroes?

Dear Sirs: As a Negro I was very much interested in your article, "The Nazi Plan for Negroes," by Hans Habe in the March 1 issue.

What struck me, however, was that the Nazi plan for Negroes approximates so closely what seems to be the American plan for Negroes. The principles listed by Mr. Habe are exactly those with which most Negroes are painfully familiar in this country. True, there are a few cases of comparative freedom for Negroes here, but there are so very few that they scarcely affect the truth of my statement.

The Nazi Negro policy seems to be the same as that of France, the British Empire, Belgium, Holland, Portugal, and the United States, except that Hitler wants, or plans, to use Negroes only in labor battalions (as most United States blacks were used in 1917-18), whereas the other white powers permit them to risk their lives in defense of those who despise them.

GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

New York, February 27

[What strikes us, on the other hand, is how a responsible Negro leader like Mr. Schuyler can permit himself to draw such dangerously misleading parallels. If the "American plan for Negroes" were anything like the Nazi plan, as described by Mr. Habe, Mr. Schuyler would be in no position to complain about it in American magazines, nor would any editor dare to publish his complaint. It seems too bad that the unquestioned ill treatment of Negroes in this country should drive men like Mr. Schuyler to equate it with a far greater evil instead of emphasizing the need to fight the race mania at home and abroad. —EDITORS THE NATION.]

Dear Sirs: As a Negro I am intensely interested in Hans Habe's "The Nazi Plan for Negroes." Mr. Habe's hint about a Nazi massacre of French Negro troops is boldly affirmed in a series of articles which are now appearing in the Negro Pittsburgh *Courier*. The *Courier's* European correspondent, R. Walter Merguson, a Negro long resident in France, asserts that more than a half million of France's black troops were murdered by the Nazis. "At no time in the history of the world have so many men, made in the Master's own image, been murdered in so short a time," says Mr. Merguson.

Where Mr. Habe hints that much of the blame is to be placed at the door of the Germans, Mr. Merguson frankly implicates the French for their insistence that Africans must fight *au sauvage;* that is, in hand-to-hand encounters with knives and pistols. French insistence on Negro savagery rebounded in an equally ferocious Nazi savagery.

JAMES W. IVY

Phoebus, Virginia, March 24

Palestine's Army

Dear Sirs: It has been England's policy in Palestine to take into its armies the same number of Arabs and of Jews. The recruiting, so far as my information goes, has lagged. Yet, conservatively, there are at least 40,000 well-trained Jewish troops ready and eager to serve with England were they to be given the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opportunity. Another 50,000 would answer the call in a moment. These figures do not include medical officers, women who want to serve in various capacities, etc. But England hesitates to call on them.

Certainly, the situation in Greece would seem to indicate a need for them. These several divisions could easily be dispatched to Northern Africa, which would, in turn, release experienced fighters for the more strenuous job which will confront the forces of democracy in Greece and Turkey.

Why are they not being used? Only England knows the answer.

NORMAN H. DIAMOND

New Castle, Pa., March 29

Author's Lament

Dear Sirs: It appears that there is something much worse than a rejection slip and the cutting of vital passages from a manuscript. It is the plight of the author whose name has been put under passages he never wrote. Some time ago I was asked to write an article on Communism for the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia now in the process of publication. Upon receiving the proofs I found that changes and additions had been made in the text without my knowledge—changes affecting the tone of the article. Thus, to my passage about the "Jews among the extreme Left Socialists in Western Europe [who] invariably identified themselves with the nation in whose midst they lived and whose language they spoke" the editors added "They were also atheistic and irreligious, hence their hostility or indifference to Jewish religions or national survival." I immediately protested against interpolations or changes of this kind, involving a phraseology and an attitude which were alien to me. The promise of the editors to print my corrections was not kept, and as a result I decline any responsibility for this passage. MAX NOMAD

New York, March 27

Is It Revolution?

Dear Sirs: It was Emperor Nero's desire that all his enemies should have but a single neck. Perhaps similar wishful thinking led democratic journalism to accept the term totalitarianism, which dictators use to euphemize ruthless despotism. These dictatorships, although akin in their methods, differ as much as do the definitions of the term in the so-called totalitarian countries. In Germany totalitarianism is explained as "a form of government claiming to coordinate all spheres of national (*voelkisch*) life"; Mussolini defined it as "the coordination of individuals in their relation to the state." But no one doubted the revolutionary character of either the bolshevist or the fascist movement. I was therefore surprised to read in a book review by Hans Kohn (issue of March 15) that "fascism is not a revolutionary movement, but the first sustained and consistent effort to make all revolutions impossible." Now this is exactly what Hitler *et consortes* want us to believe. Both they and their appeasers insist that the rapacious despotism turned the revolution into new legal order, a form of government which is an equivalent alternative of democracy. According to Carlyle: "Revolution, like jelly sufficiently boiled, needs only to be poured into shapes of constitution and consolidated therein—could it, indeed, contrive to cool." Fascism is evidently still seething and boiling. Not even its effort "to make all revolutions impossible" is a discriminative mark of consolidation. So far all revolutions have done their utmost to foil any potential revolution or counter-revolution. As a rule, some Napoleon eventually creates a synthesis of the old order and the new disorder. However, it seems doubtful whether the present attempt to be a Robespierre and a Napoleon in one will have a lasting success. RUSTEM VAMBERY

New York, March 25

The Decision Is Impossible

Dear Sirs: After two careful readings of the article by Brooks Atkinson (issue of March 8) I get the impression that he has just begun the study of history. One who tries to pass judgment on the moral values of men, or of nations, certainly ought to take into consideration more than the events of the past ten years. Yet this decade is all with which Mr. Atkinson concerns himself; then he hands down a decision—a simple one indeed. Evidently he does not consider expediency or prudence or self-interest a sufficiently exalted standard by which to judge conduct. Nothing less than the absolutely good, the good in itself, will do for him. He is free to accept that standard if he wishes, but he might be embarrassed by the conclusions to which he would be led if he applied it impartially. To cap it all, he enlists Jesus Christ on his side. Wasn't he the man from Galilee who said something about loving your enemies?

If Mr. Atkinson read the review of "Ambassador Dodd's Diary" in the same issue of *The Nation,* he might have an inkling of how inadequate is his judgment of the respective merits of the warring powers. H. C. DEKKER

Portland, Ore., March 28

CONTRIBUTORS

STOYAN PRIBICHEVICH, who came to this country in 1935, is the son of the famous Yugoslavian patriot and statesman. He is the author of "World Without End," a book on the Balkans, and has written extensively under the pen name of P. B. Stoyan. At present he is an associate editor of *Fortune.*

DONALD W. MITCHELL, a close student of naval and military policy in the United States, has written articles on the subject for numerous periodicals.

CHARLES DUFF, *The Nation's* new British correspondent, is editor of "Voice of Spain," a pro-Loyalist periodical published in London. He has served as Press Officer of the British Foreign Office for eighteen years.

CHRISTOPHER LA FARGE, poet, novelist, and short-story writer, became interested in the problems discussed in his article while doing a voluntary study of the factory situation in Rhode Island.

GILBERT HIGHET is professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia University.

HUGH H. DARBY is an associate in the department of biological chemistry at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University.

JAMES ORRICK, a Southerner by birth and education, has devoted himself to the study of the South and its problems.

EDGAR SNOW, well-known Far Eastern correspondent, wrote "Red Star Over China" and "The Battle for Asia."

DOROTHY VAN DOREN, formerly associate editor of *The Nation,* is the author of "Those First Affections."

GREGORY ZILBOORG, one of the leading American psychoanalysts, is the author of "The Medical Man and the Witch During the Renaissance."

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. Price 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, $1. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index. Two weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED